

Brief notes on Sri Chakra (Yantra) Definition, Construction and Archana Procedure



By

Udaya Bhaaskar Bulusu

Preface

Brief Notes on Sri Chakra (Yantra) Definition, Construction and Archana Procedure is an part of “An Encyclopedia on Sri Lalitha Tripura Sundari - Unveling the Secret of The Exotic Power of Sri Chakra Archana”. In this book we try to highlight the Contruction Procedure of Sri Yantra and then various forms of Sri Chakra Archana in brief and also Sri Vidya Upasana Tantra.

“An Encyclopedia on Sri Lalitha Tripura Sundari - Unveling the Secret of The Exotic Power of Sri Chakra Archana” is an end-to-end knowledge crest to reach the Moksha Marga and to derive various forms of worshipping the Sri Lalitha Maha Tripura Sundari and to activate Kundalini Maha Shakthi.

The Lalitha Maha Tripura Sundari is an ultimate power through which all the Chakras can be activated very easily. But the biggest problem is the right procedures to adopt and till date no single source is available to do it.

There are various forms of Sri Chakra Archana and key procedures commonly adopted are Kadgamala Prakarana and Navavarna Pooja Vidhana. But, there are other ways and means to take up the Sri Chakra Archana (Sri Chakra can be either Meru Form or Sri Yantra Form), because Sri Chakra's key mediatating god is Sri Lalitha Parabhattarika who is also called as Sri Chakra Bindu Rupini Sri Rajarajeswari Sri Devi Sri Maha Vidya Sri Maha Tripura Sundari Sri Lalitha Parabhattarika (the full name of Sri Lalitha Maha Tripura Sundari);. It means she can be worshiped in any form by her short name procedures.

The Sri Chakra Archana is an ideal systems wherein it can be worshiped by means of Mantra-Yantra-Tantropasana. The ritual procedures of all the three forms are different from one another, but the goal is awakening of Kundalini Shakthi or Shad Chakropasana to get the ultimate power and to attain moksha.

According to Mantropasana procedures, She can be meditated by Panchadashi Mantra, Shodashi Mantra, Kadgamala Namavali or even Lalitha Sahasranamam. Which means, Sri Chakra Archana by means of Bija Mantra Dhyana followed by kumkumarchana and Nivedana a simplest form with not much complexity of rituals.

But Yantropasana Procedures has a bit complexity and the procedures has to be apodted by means Navavarna Pooja or Kadgamala Prakarana (thou both are same as per modern rituals are concerned but they are different to the greater extent and partially Kagdamala Prakarana is included in Navavarna Pooja) and either

Panchadashi or Shodashi Mantra Dyana and then Sri Lalitha Archana for Kumkumarchana followed by Shodasa Upacharas. If one has more patience to to attain better results the Dasa Mahavidya Bija mantra sampoti dhyana after Panchadashi or Shodashi Mantra Dyana will yield quick results; but the sadaka should take highest precautions including Brahmacharya, Satvik aahara, controlling panchedriyas; especially by means of kama, krodha, lobha, moha, madha, and mascharyas and has to follow the Truth and Sanyasa Ashrama paths.

But Tantropasana Procedures has highest complexity and the procedures has to be apodted strictly by means Sri Vidya Upasana or Chandi Upasana or Dasa Maha Vidya Upasana which has scared rituals as explained in Rig Veda and Atharvana Veda including Vamachara rituals followed by Navavarna Pooja. The ritual also calls for vivastra archana and hata yoga procedures and the sadaka should take much more highest precautions then Yantropasana and preferred to leave Grustashrama to bind to the procedures and to get right results.

In this modern era / Kali yuga following Tantropasana Procedures are highly difficult, so many gurus has created short-cuts to it by clubbing Yantropasana and Tantropasana Procedures and it has its own implications too by following such procedures. It is like farming for faster with highest yield by adopting Fertilizer Procedures in Agriculture, wherein the yield does not have any value in terms of calorific values and it doesnot nourish any strength to the body also but it shows results physically; similarly modern approach may give the result but cannot lead to moksha marga.

It is better to follow Matrasadhana or Mantropasana and then adopting Yantropasana Procedures after gaining certin power thru Mantrasadhana. Because, vibrating manipura and anahata chakras by Mantropasana is also possible & very easy also. Once anahata chakra got vibrated following yantropasana procedures will make the sadaka to understand the real purpose of procedures and rituals to be followed also, because vibrating Visudha Chakra means doing everything is by heart and soul to reach Sahasrara Chakra and in this process the sadaka will attain self enlightenment in following the right rituals.

Once sadaka vibrates Sahasrara Chakra Power then complete enlightenment has achieved to reach the Moksha Marga.

But in this modern era many of the people doesnot know the importance of praying also and some doesnot believe the god and our ancient ritual procedures also

because of modern indefinite meditating procedures and modern gurus feel that ancient system is a trash also.

If we can review by backward study, all the modern theories are extracted from the existing ancient principles of yoga procedures and re-derived as modern practicing; but all the yoga procedures including Patanjali Sutras has called for definitive process binding to the vedic ritual procedures. But modern gurus has re-directed the process to adopt short-cuts and to make the system easy to adopt by following the caption of “Something is better than Nothing”.

Yes, to start the activities or to initiate, modern theories will be a channel but after sometime the same should be transformed into the exact process as derived by the ancient vedic culture to get the ultimate results. Hence, the book An Encyclopedia on Sri Lalitha Tripura Sundari - Unveiling the Secret of The Exotic Power of Sri Chakra Archana has be divided into four Volumes from the basics of Hinduism & Vedic Culture to Sri Chakra Archana procedures followed by Lalitha Sahasranamam bhasyam.

Udaya Bhaaskar Bulusu



I Dedicate this to to H.H. Goddess Sri Chakra Bindu Rupini Sri Rajarajeswari Sri Devi
Sri Maha Vidya Sri Maha Tripura Sundari Sri Lalitha Parabhattacharika and to my
beloved Parents

Index

Sri Chakra (Yantra) Definition & Consturction Procedure - Page No. 6 to 84

Types Sri Chakra Archanas and its Procedures in brief – Page No. 86 - 299

Sree Gurubyo Namaha

Sree Matre Namaha

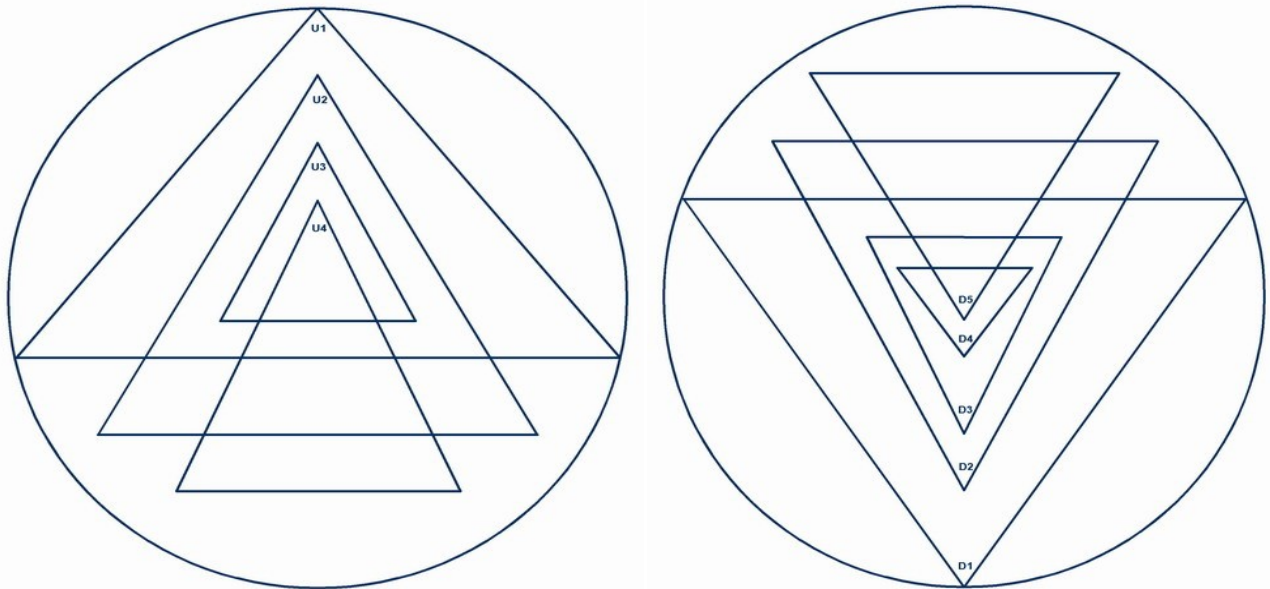
Sree Maha Ganapathe Namaha

Sri Chakra (Yantra) Definition & Consturction Procedure

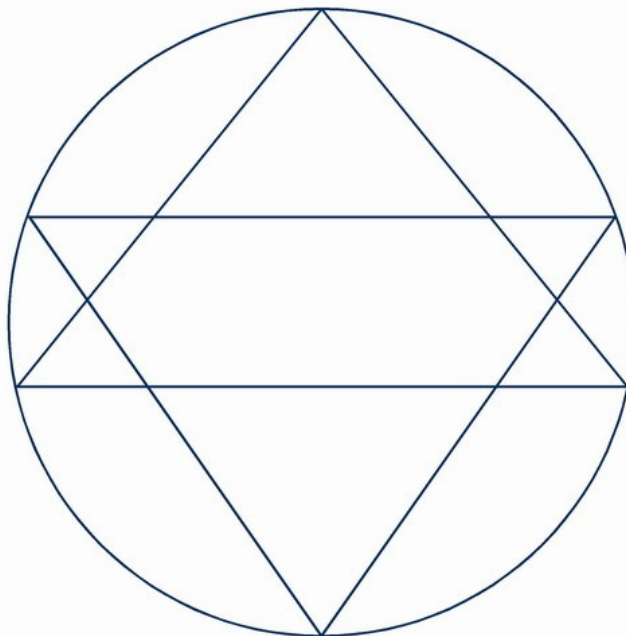


This page describes the basic characteristics that describe the Sri Yantra geometry.

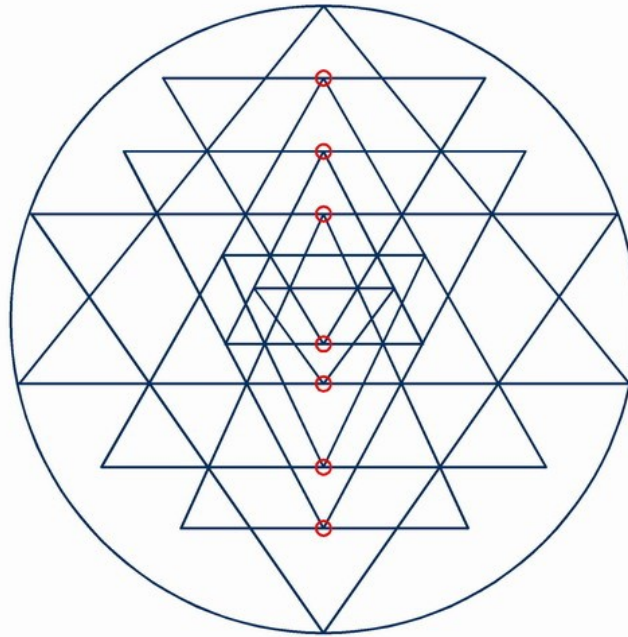
1. The Sri Yantra is composed of **nine interlocking triangles**. **Four triangles pointing up**(U1, U2, U3, U4) and **five triangles pointing down** (D1, D2, D3, D4, D5). Only triangles (U3, D3, D4) are completely enclosed by another triangle.



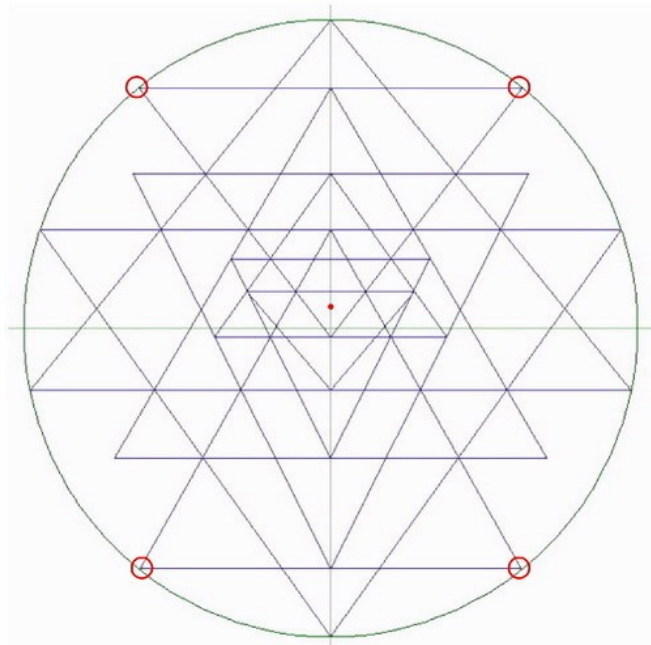
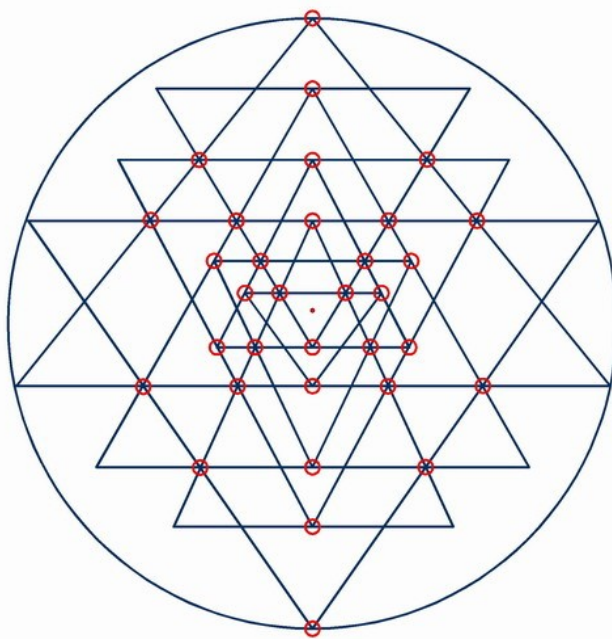
2. The two biggest triangles touch the outer circle on all three points.



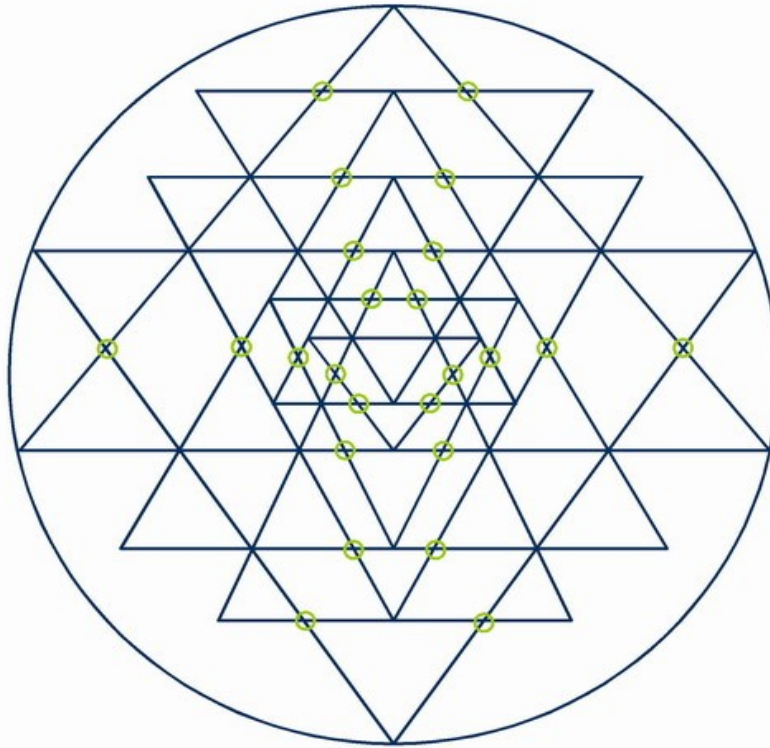
3. Except for the two biggest triangles, all apexes touch the base of another triangle.



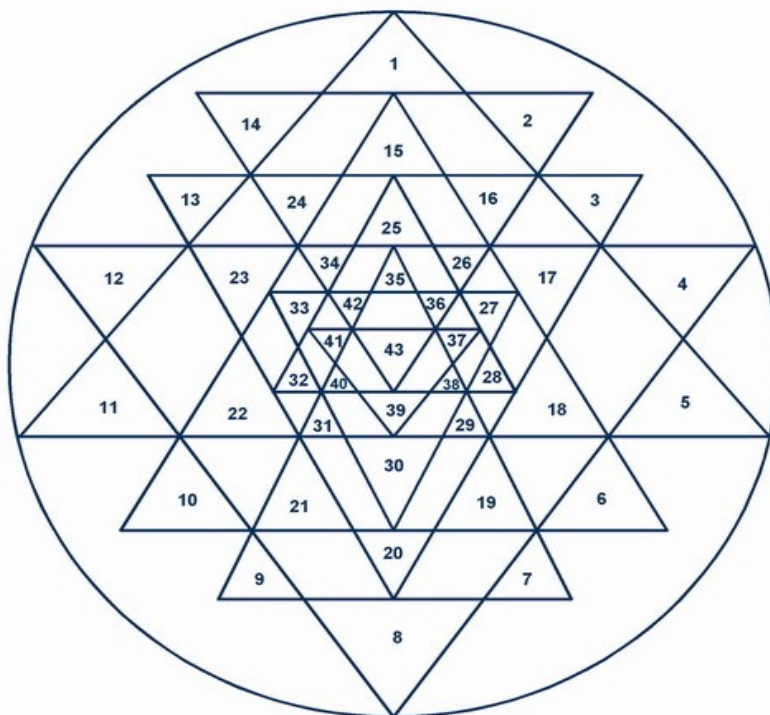
4. There are 33 intersections resulting from three lines meeting at a point. Note: Some configurations can have 4 additional such intersections (U4 and D5 corners touch the outside circle) for a total of 37.



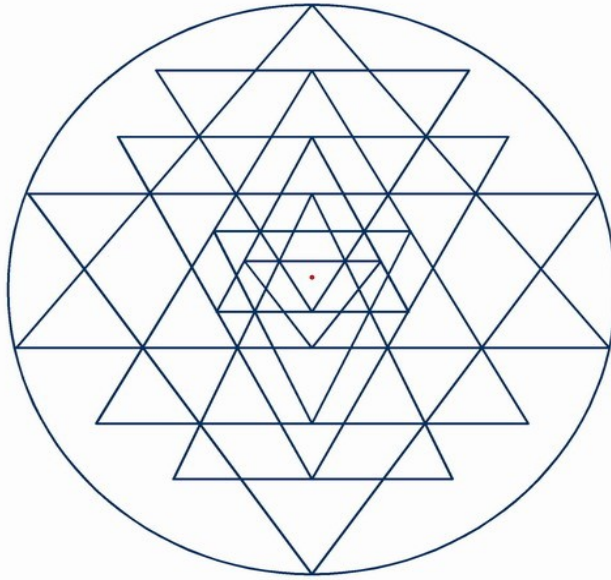
5. There are 24 intersections resulting from two lines crossing.



7. A total of 43 triangles are created from the overlapping of the nine original triangles.



7. The bindu point is located at the geometric center of the innermost triangle.

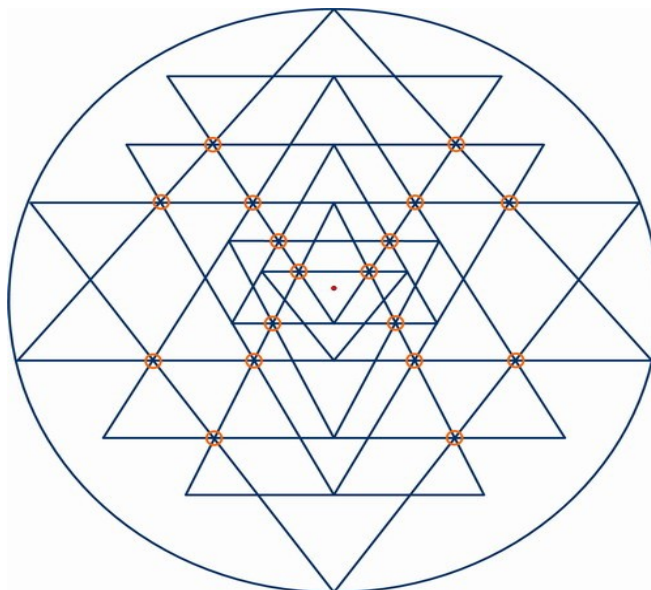


Sri Yantra Intersections

Marma Points

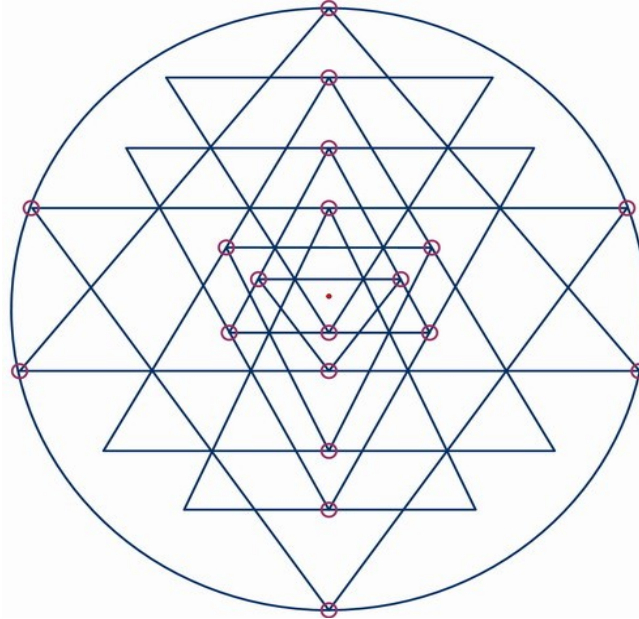
The triple intersection points (where three lines meet) in the Sri Yantra are often correlated to the marma points on the human body. They can be subdivided in two general groups according to the following criteria:

GROUP 1:



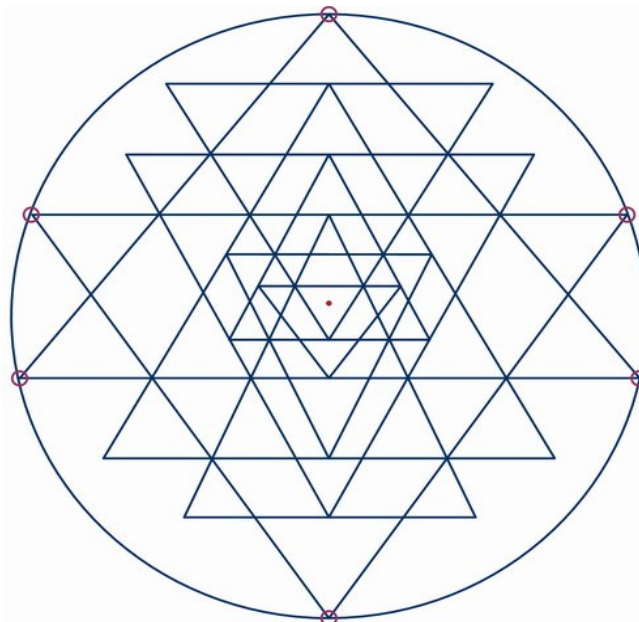
The first group includes the points that result from three line crossing. In this configuration there is 18 such intersections.

GROUP 2:



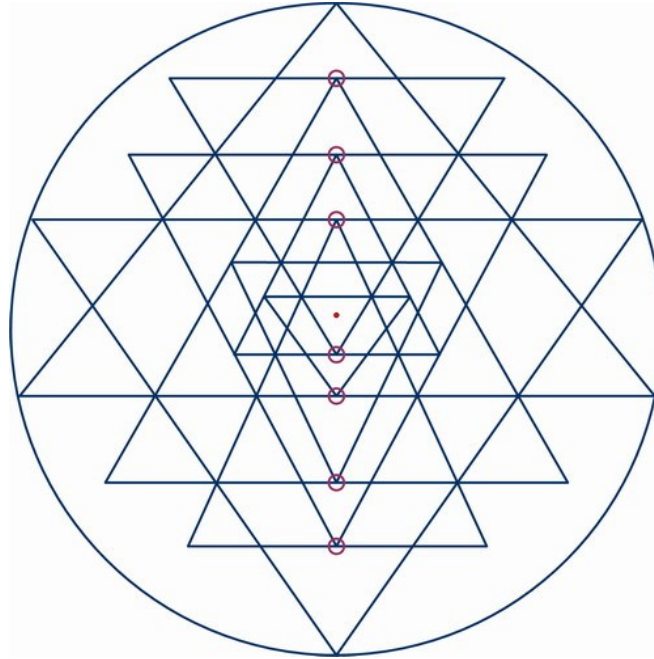
The second group is includes the points that result from the apex of a triangle touching the base of another triangle or the outer circle. In this configuration there is 19 such intersections. Four more points are possible if triangle D5 and U4 touch the outer circle. We can further subdivide this group into 3 subgroups.

GROUP 2A:



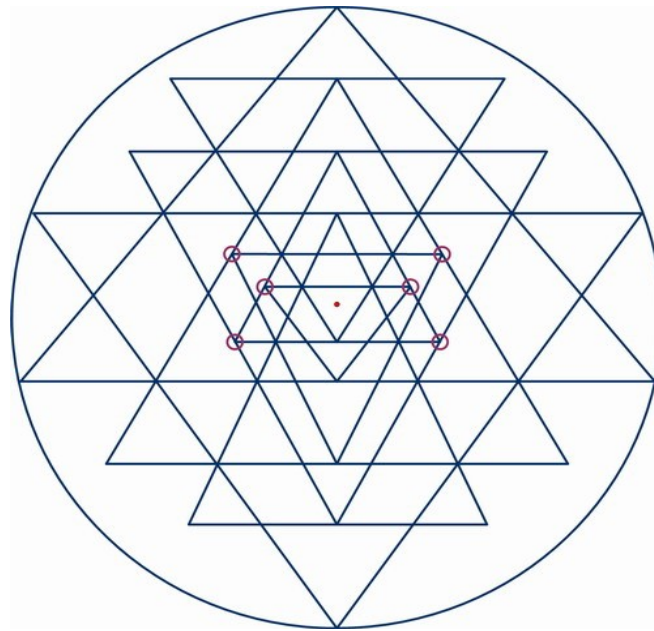
There are 6 points where the apex of a triangle touches the outside circle. In some configurations this number can go up to 10.

GROUP 2B:



7 points where the apex of a triangle touches the base of another triangle.

GROUP 2C:



6 points where the apex of a triangle touches the side of another triangle.

How to Draw the Sri Yantra

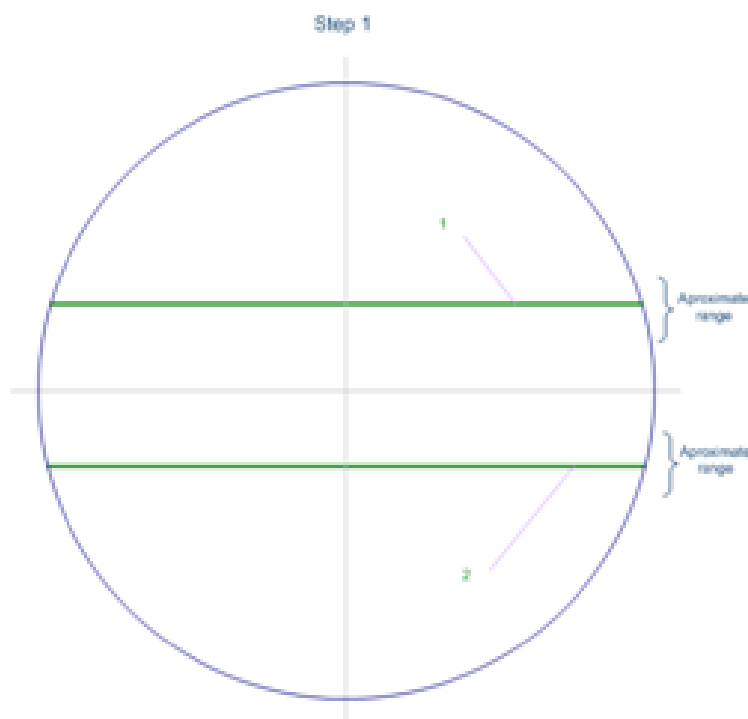
As you have probably found out already there are a great number of methods out there to draw the Sri Yantra. Most of them are very poor and will produce a figure with mistakes at many of the triple intersections. You should know that, at least in theory it is not possible to draw a perfect Sri Yantra. There is always some little mistake even if it can't be seen on the drawing.

This method ensures that there will be mistakes at only two of the nodes, which is the minimum amount of mistakes possible when drawing this figure. This method will not necessarily produce an optimal Sri Yantra.

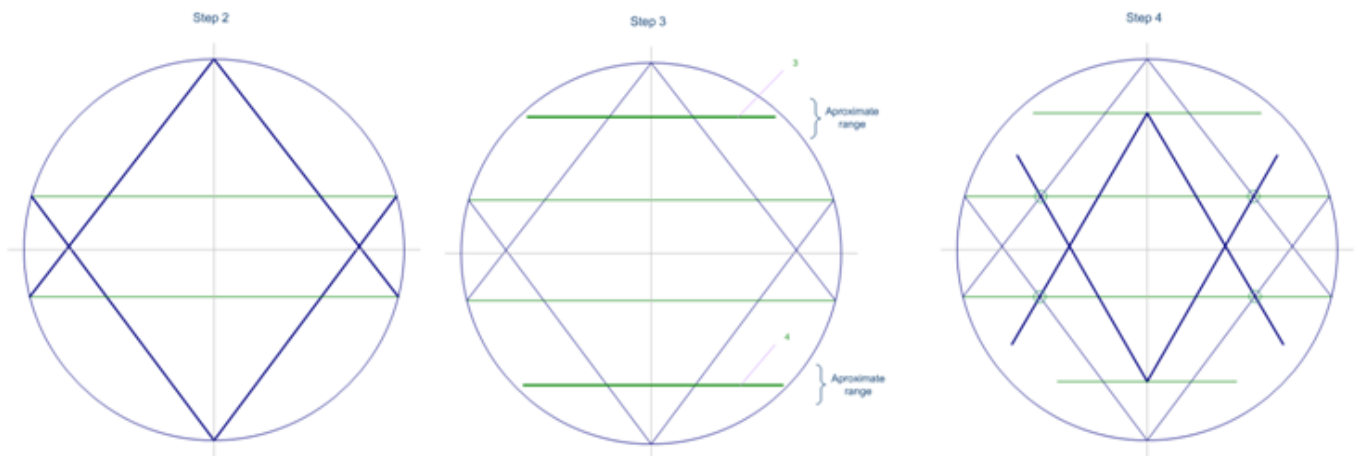
The Sri Yantra geometry has five degrees of freedom. In other words you will have to decide on the placement of five lines to construct the figure.

The amount of mistake in the resulting figure will depend on where you have located these five lines. If the resulting figure has a big error (two extraneous triangles) you will have to go back and change the location of some of the lines and start over.

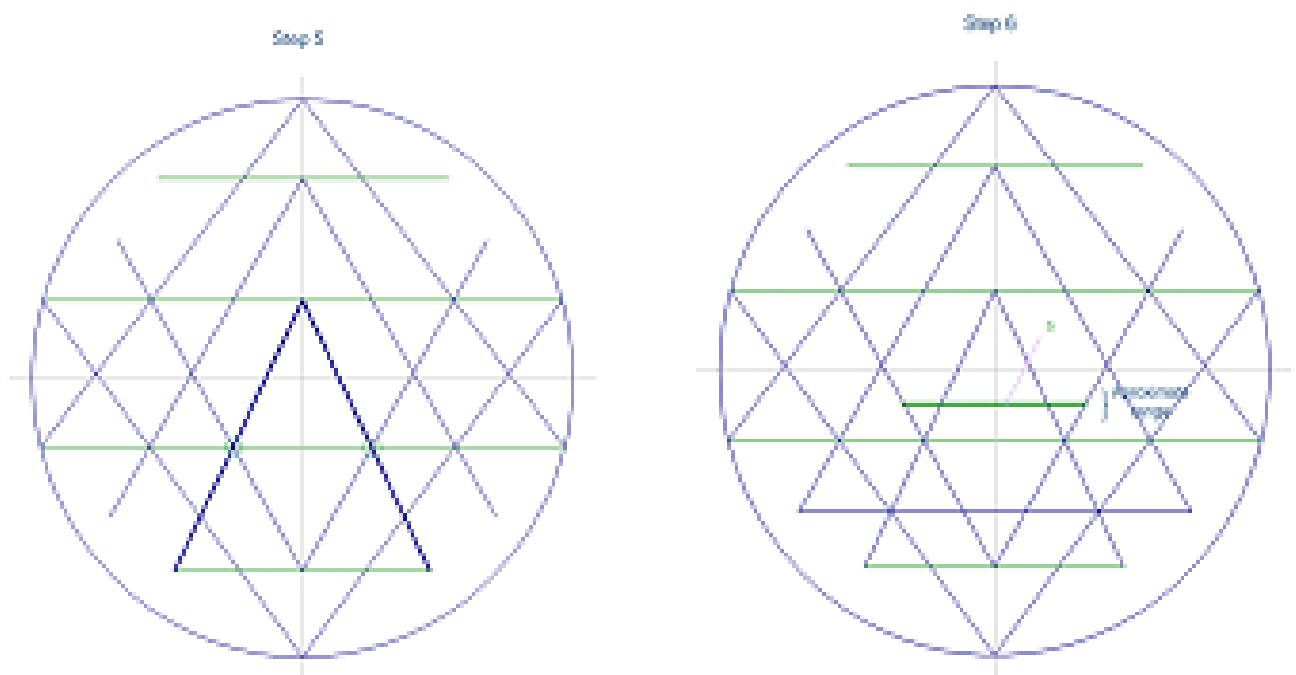
If you want to experiment with the Sri Yantra without having to draw it try the interactive Sri Yantra.



The green lines are the key lines that define the Sri Yantra. They are not unique, in the sense that other lines could be selected. But there will always be 5 specific points to define the Sri Yantra. This is similar to an equation with five variables or five degrees of freedom.. You need to choose values (positions) for these five variables to completely define it's shape. By choosing different positions for these lines you will end up with different Sri Yantra configurations.

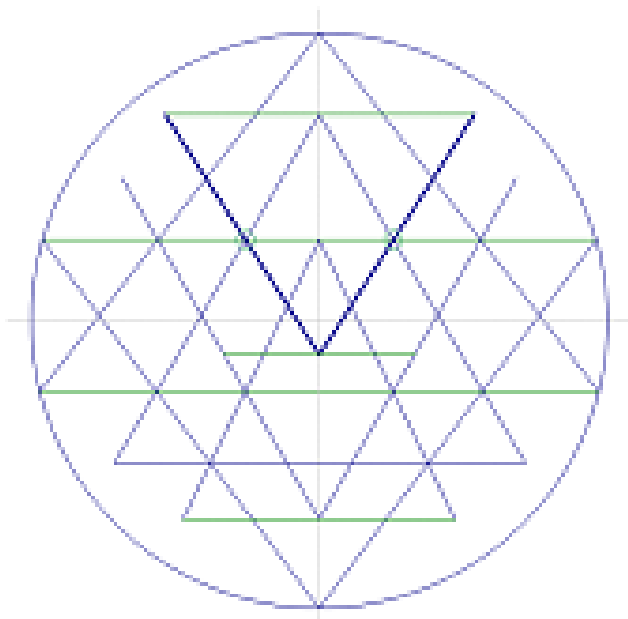


The green circles shows the points that are used to draw the new lines. The other point is usually where the base of a triangle meets the vertical axis. New reference points are created every time a new line is drawn.

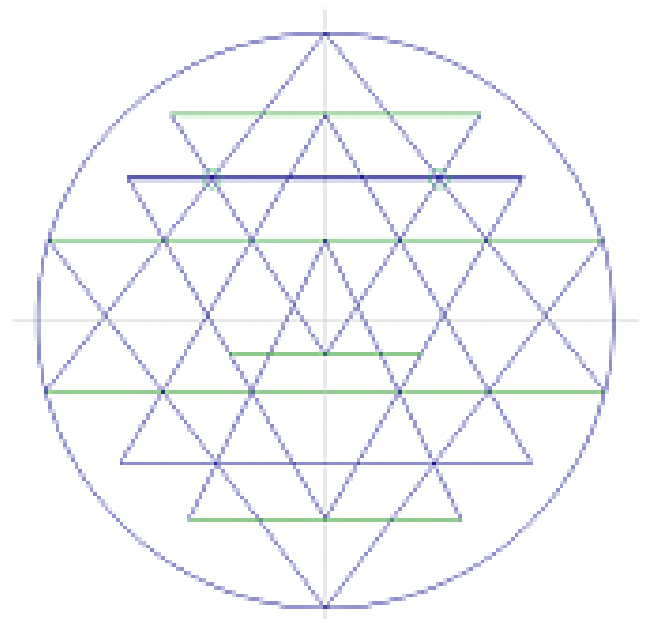


Line 5 is the last line that is needed to finish the Sri Yantra. There is no real obvious way to know where it should go other than by trial and error. Of course this can be programmed and calculated but this is beyond the purpose of this page. In this example the 5th and last line is very close to it's ideal position so the error in the final figure is very small. If it is drawn higher or lower the error will increase proportionally. We will show later where the error shows up.

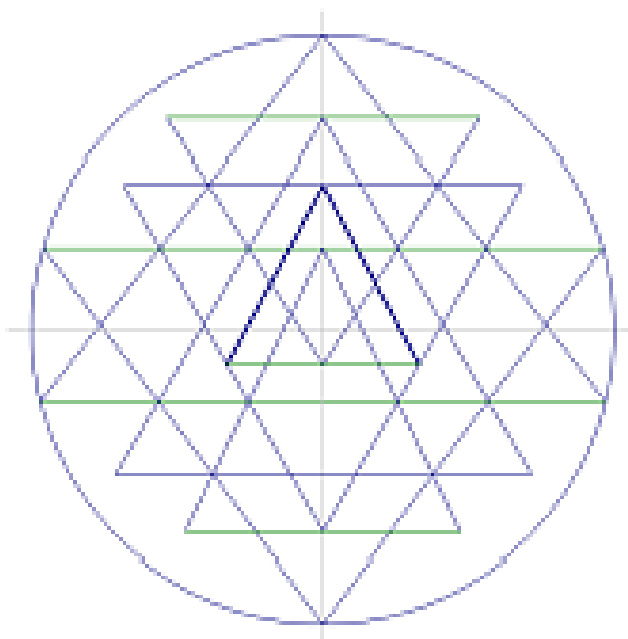
Step 7



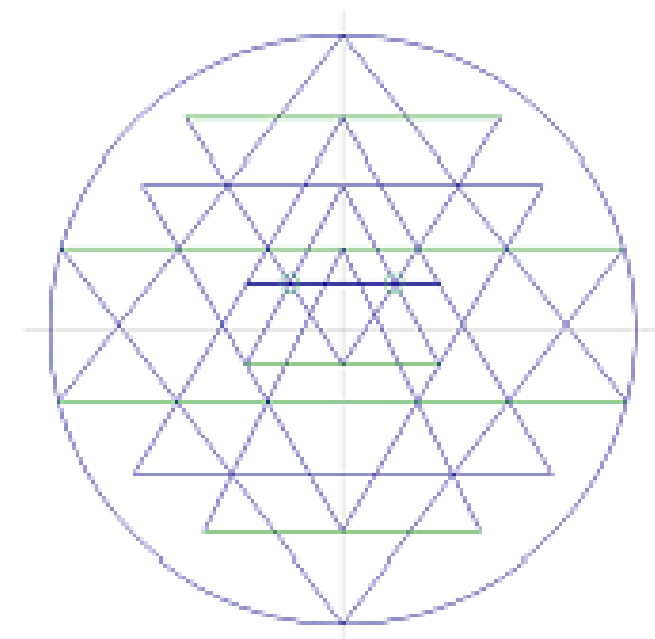
Step 8

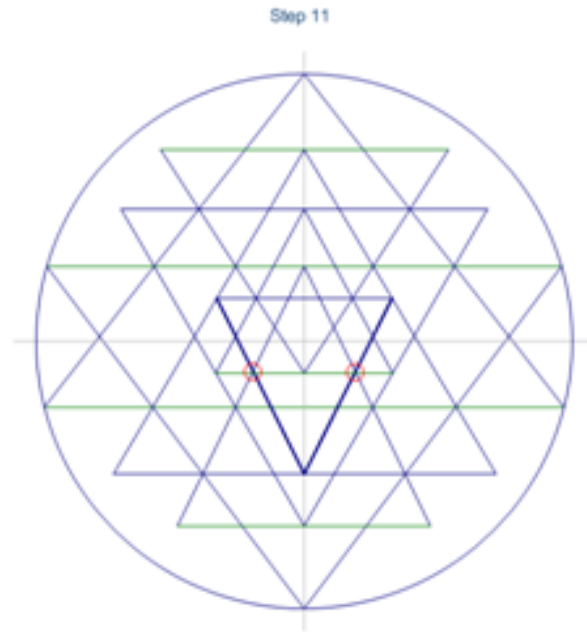


Step 9

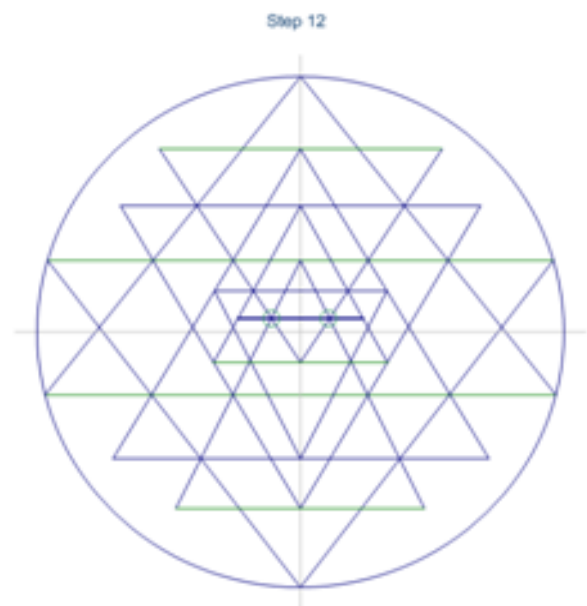
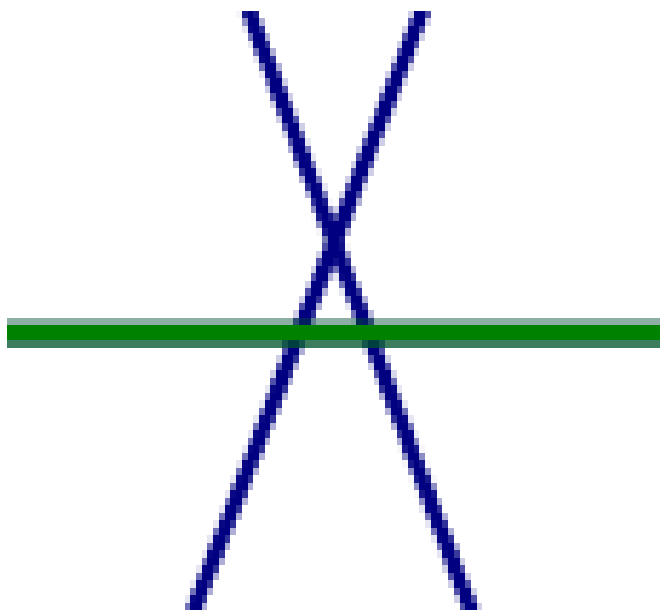


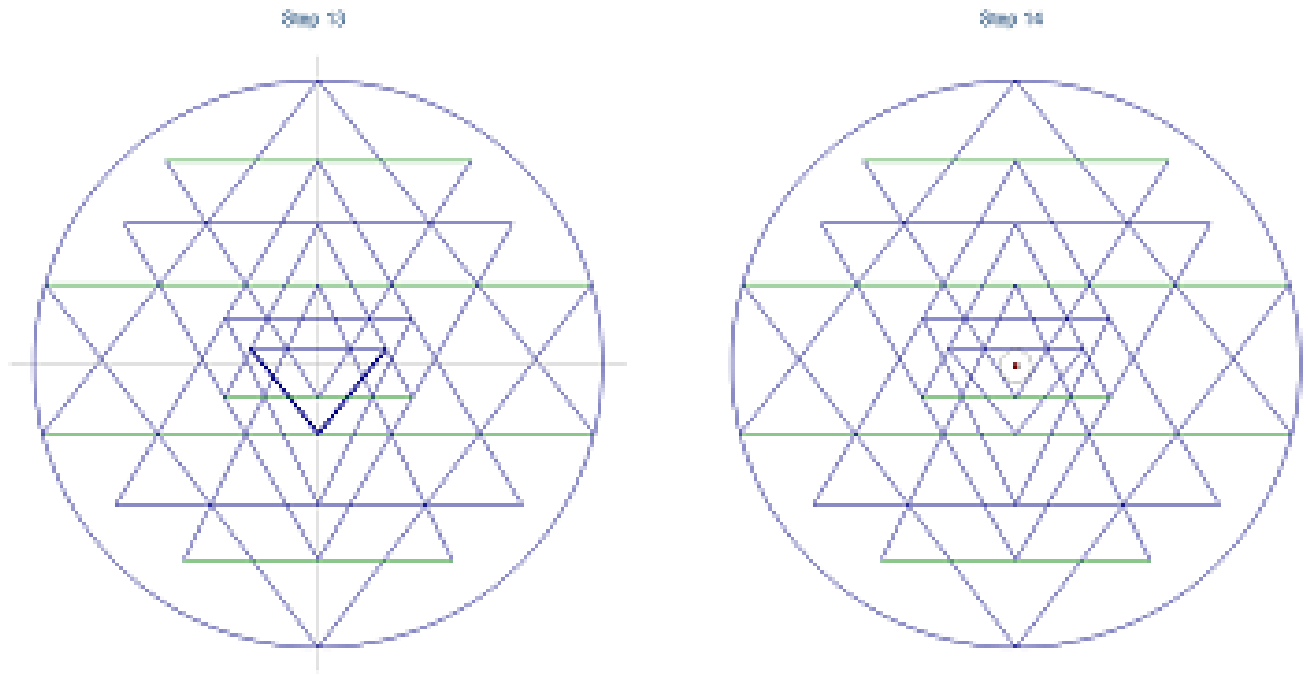
Step 10





Here is where the error shows up (indicated by the two red circles). In this case the error is small and hard to see in a drawing of this size. See caption of the right. Using a thicker line is a common way to disguise the errors. The thicker the line the more difficult to see the error. If the error is too big then we need to go back to step 6 and change the position of line 5. After redrawing you will see if the error is bigger or smaller. A bigger error indicates that you need to move the line in the opposite direction.



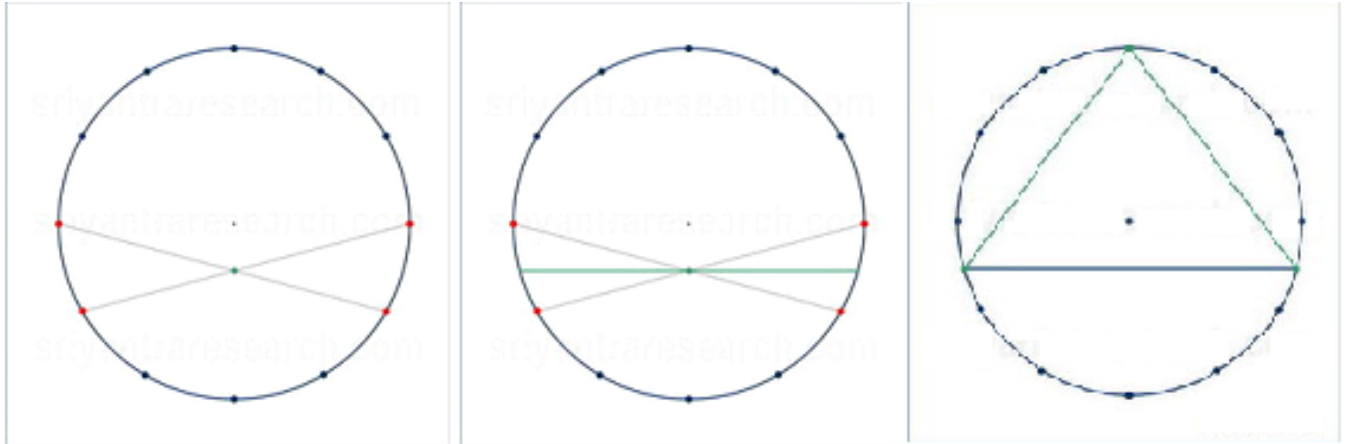


The last step is to draw the bindu point. To find the center of the smallest inner triangle we draw a circle inside the triangle and locate the bindu at the center of that circle.



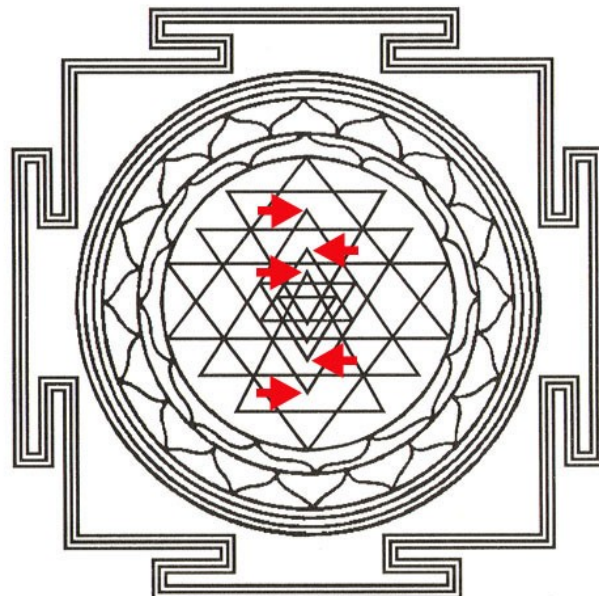
This completes the drawing of the center part of the Sri Yantra. Not show here are the others circles with petals and the outer square enclosure.

Drawing Method for the Optimal Sri Yantra



False Sri Yantra

Over time people tend to simplify things to the point where the original intent is lost. This is the most distorted version of the Sri Yantra. We can't even call it a Sri Yantra any more since it doesn't even answer to the the basic criteria that requires all the triangles apex to be connected to the base of another triangle. See figures below.



The figure above shows the problem with this very distorted version of the Sri Yantra. Notice how the apex of many of the inner triangles are not connected to the base of another triangle



How to Draw the Sri Yantra

There is an abundance of methods that lead to different configurations of the Sri Yantra.

We have listed some of there here:

Classic construction methods

1. Inward - Kaivalyashrama
2. Outward - Lakshmidhara

New construction methods

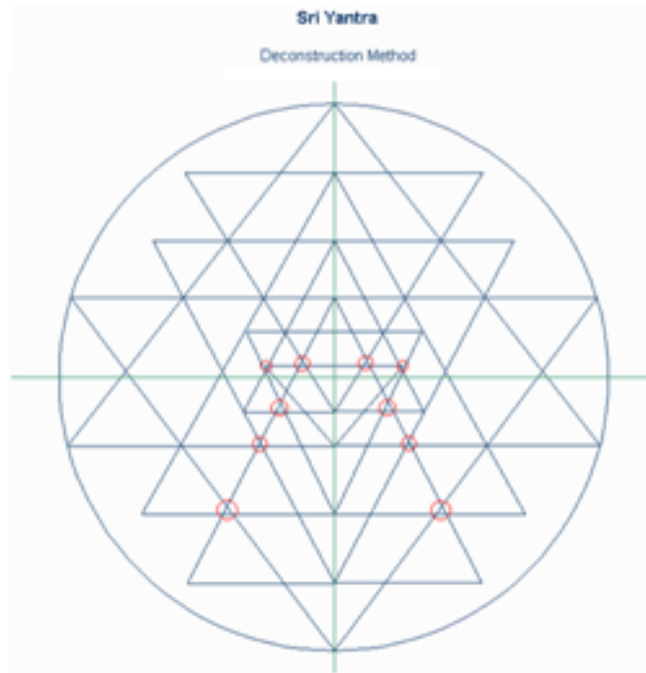
1. **Patrick Flanagan - Precise**
2. **Lori LaPage - Seed of Life**
3. **Michael Pudney - Simple and precise**
4. **Vishvamitra - Elegant but imprecise**
5. **Shri Vidya Trust - Very imprecise**

Classic Construction Methods

1. Inward construction method from commentary on Saundarya-lahiri written by Kaivalyashrama.

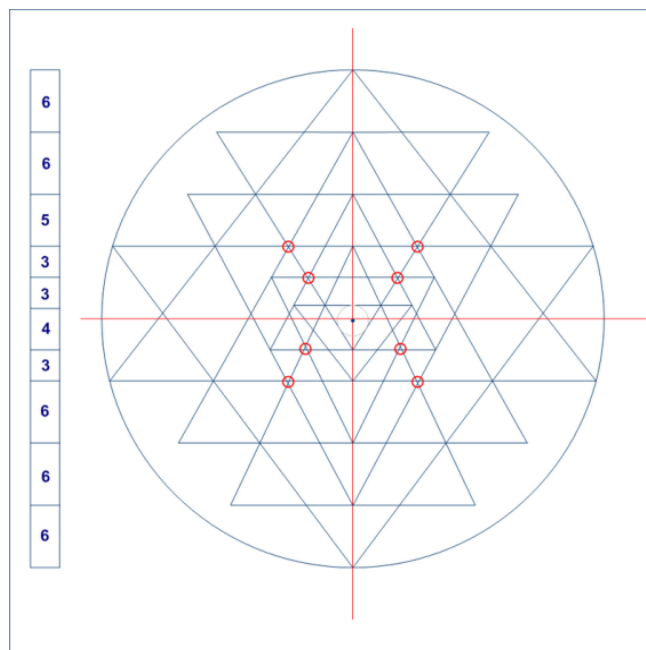
This is the figure we obtain if we apply the instructions that can be found here.

1. Draw a circle of the required size with a vertical line through the centre and divide this line into 48 equal units.
2. On this line make nine marks at a distance of 6, 12, 17, 20, 23, 27, 30, 36, and 42 units from the top, and draw nine horizontal lines (numbered 1-9) through these marks to meet with the circle.
3. At both ends of the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 8th, and 9th lines rub off 3, 5, 16, 18, 16, 4 and 3 units respectively.
3. Join the ends of the 1st line to the centre of the 6th, the ends of the 2nd to the centre of the 9th, the ends of the 3rd to the circle at the bottom of the axis, the ends of the 4th to the centre of the 8th, the ends of the 5th to the centre of the 7th, the ends of the 6th to the centre of the 2nd, the ends of the 7th to the circle at the top of the vertical axis, the ends of the 8th to the centre of the 1st, and the ends of the 9th to the centre of the 3rd.

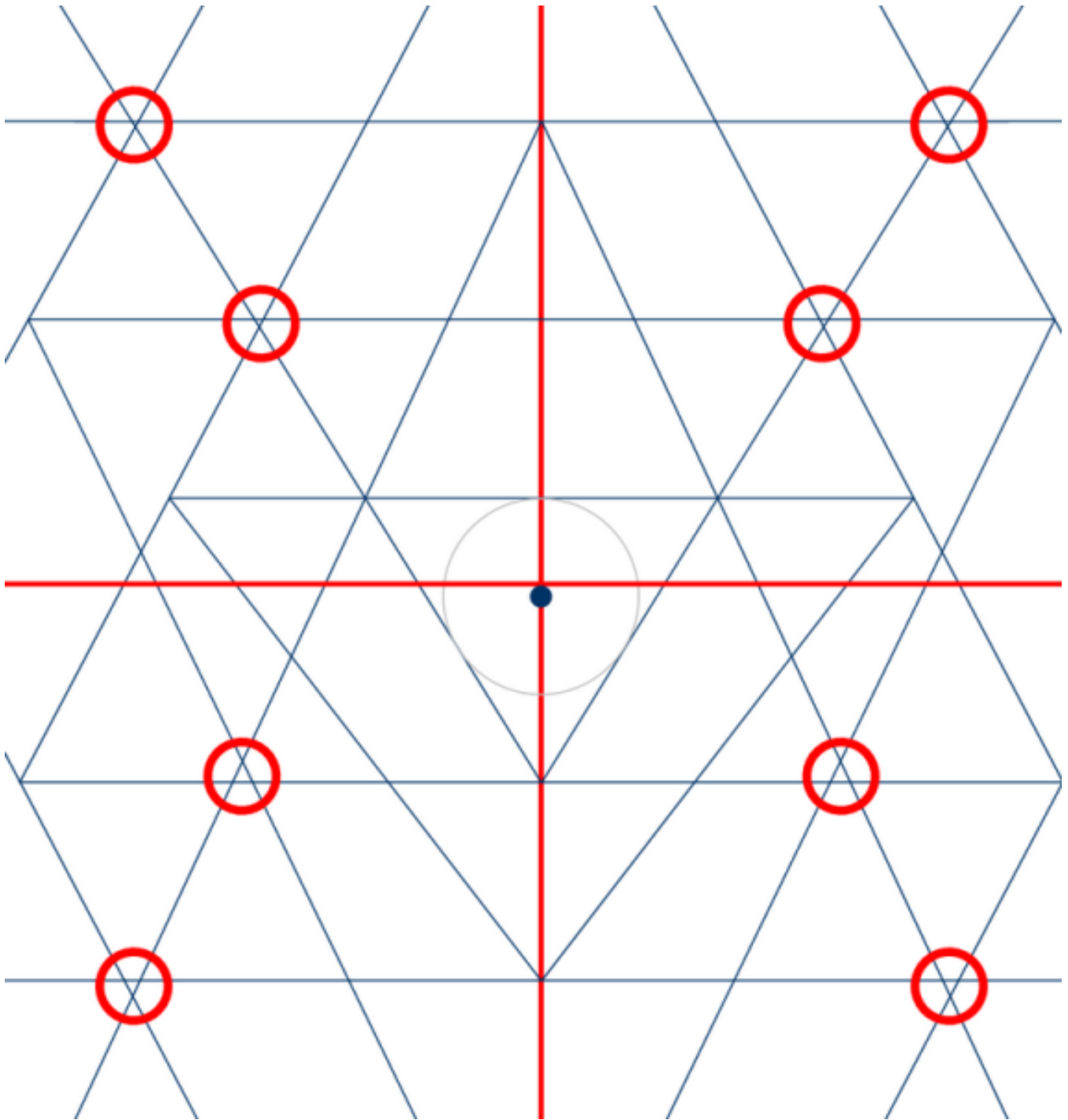


After applying this method we obtain a very crude approximation with errors on many of the triple junction points. The reason for so many errors is a result of not following the proper drawing sequence shown here.

Another version of this method can be found here. By applying this variation we obtain the following figure:



Again this method produces more errors than necessary at the triple intersections. Here is a detailed view of the center area.

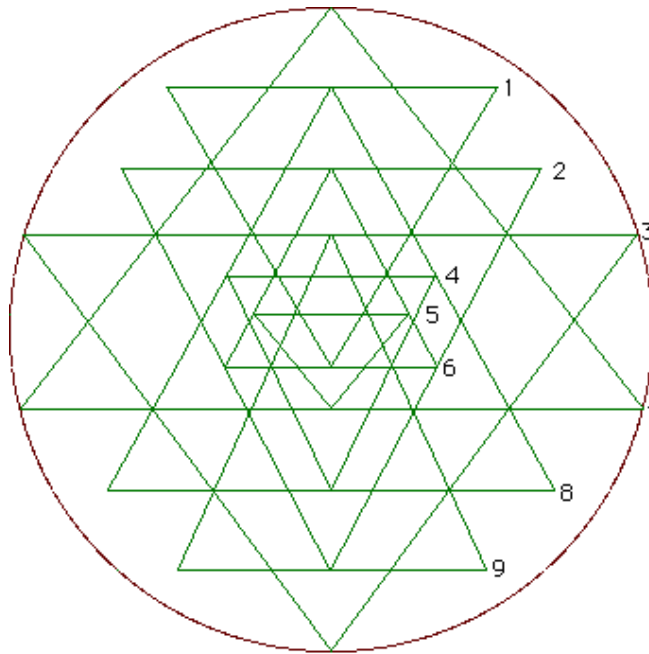


We also notice that the figure is not concentric, i.e. the center of the circle doesn't match with the center of the inner most triangle. One could reduce the number of errors by applying the proper drawing sequence to this method.

Sambara-Krama

Attribute to the "Left Hand Path" of Tantrism, the inward approach to meditation, starting from a circle and moving towards the center.

This technique is rather involved, resulting in slight errors at the intersections (marma-sthana) and non-congruent large triangles. This method probably accounts for most of the examples in the literature.

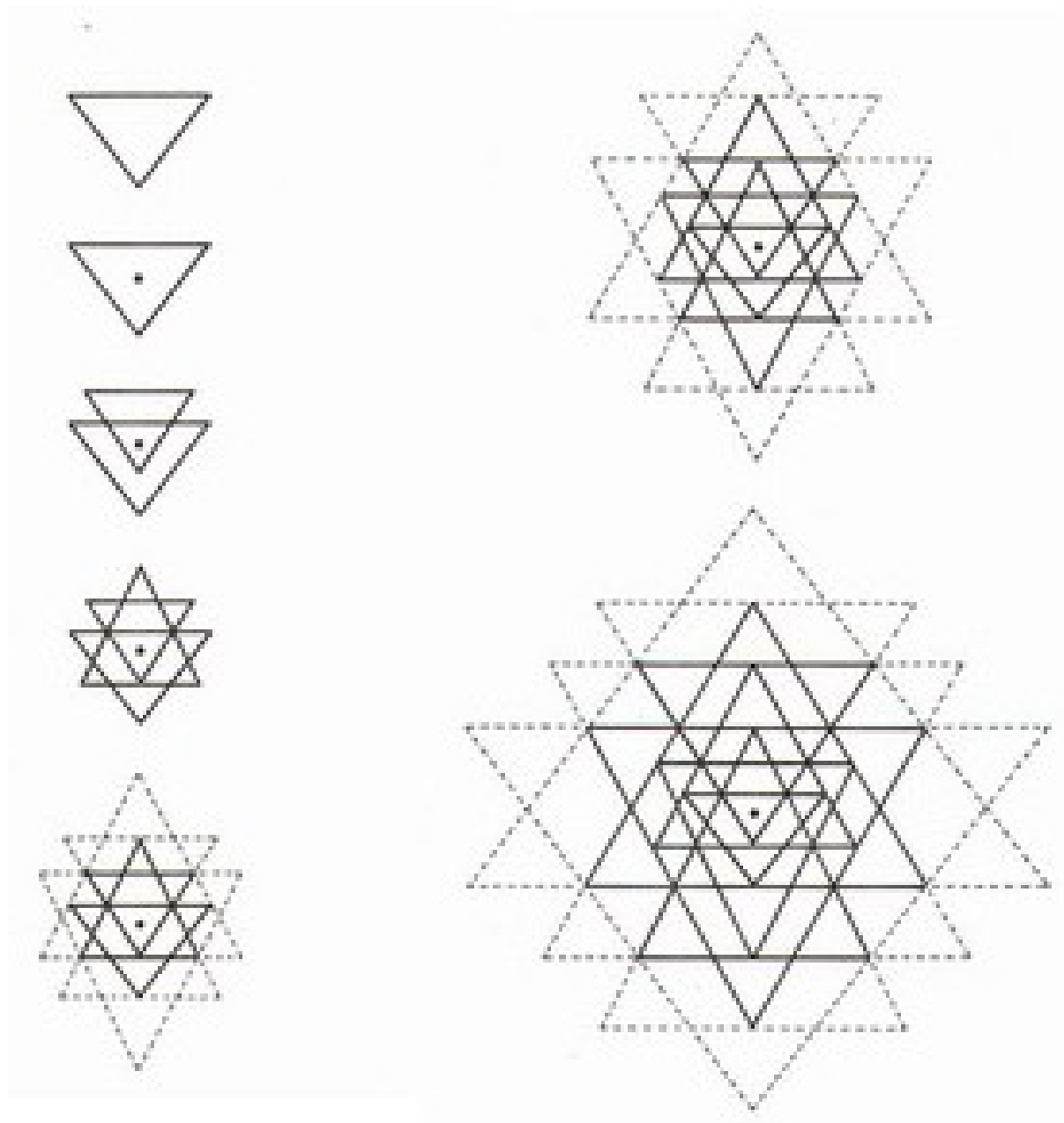


1. Draw a circle of the required size with a vertical line through the centre and divide this line into 48 equal units.
2. On this line make nine marks at a distance of 6, 12, 17, 20, 23, 27, 30, 36, and 42 units from the top, and draw nine horizontal lines (numbered 1-9) through these marks to meet with the circle.
3. At both ends of the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 8th, and 9th lines rub off 3, 5, 16, 18, 16, 4 and 3 units respectively.
4. Join the ends of the 1st line to the centre of the 6th, the ends of the 2nd to the centre of the 9th, the ends of the 3rd to the circle at the bottom of the axis, the ends of the 4th to the centre of the 8th, the ends of the 5th to the centre of the 7th, the ends of the 6th to the centre of the 2nd, the ends of the

7th to the circle at the top of the vertical axis, the ends of the 8th to the centre of the 1st, and the ends of the 9th to the centre of the 3rd.

2. Outward Construction method from commentary on Saundarya-lahari by Lakshmidhara.

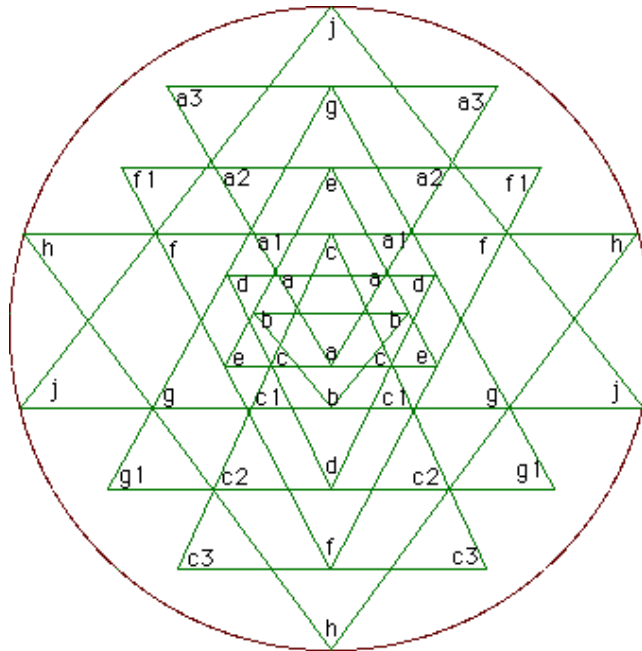
This method is incomplete and doesn't have all the information necessary to draw the Sri Yantra. One has to guess the location of some of the lines which will in most cases lead to an inaccurate figure.



Srsti-krama

Attribute to the Tantric 'Right Hand Path'. The instructions are complicated and somewhat obscure, and it is not obvious that a yantra can be constructed in this fashion without a lot of luck or an example to work from.

This method potentially results in perfect intersections (marma-sthana)



Inner eight-pointed figure

- A. Draw isosceles triangle A with apex pointing down and vertical line through the apex and centre of base. Place the bindu on this line near the apex of A.
- B. Above the bindu, draw horizontal through the sides of A to form the base of triangle B also drawn with apex pointing down.
- C. Draw horizontal through apex of A to form base of triangle C with apex pointing up and sides passing through the intersections of the sides of A and the base of B.

Inner ten-pointed figure (antar-dasara):

- D. Produce base of A both ways to form base of triangle D with apex pointing down and sides passing through the ends of base of C.
- E. Produce base of C both ways to form base of triangle E with apex pointing up and sides passing through the ends of base of A and B.
- A1. Produce sides of A to meet horizontal through apex of C.
- C1. Produce sides of C to meet horizontal through apex of B.

Outer ten-pointed figure (bahir-dasara):

- F. Produce base of A1 both ways to form base of triangle F with apex pointing down and sides passing through the ends of base of E and C1.
- G. Produce base of C1 both ways to form base of triangle G with apex pointing up and sides passing through the ends of base of D and A1.
- A2. Produce sides of A to meet horizontal through the apex of E.
- C2. Produce sides of C to meet horizontal through the apex of D.

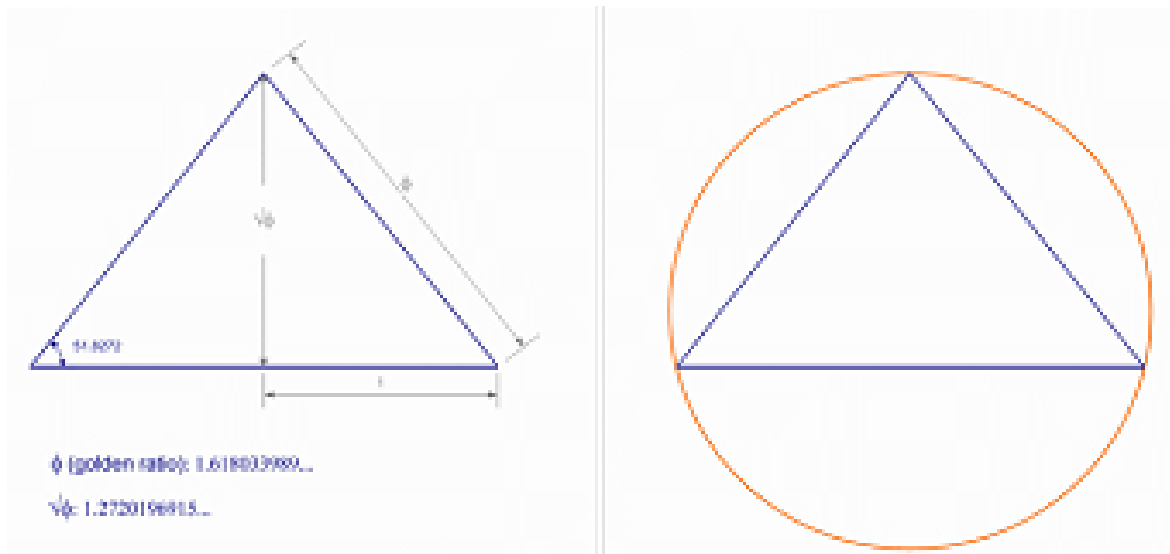
Fourteen-pointed figure (caturdasara)

- H. Produce base of A1/F both ways to form base of triangle H with apex pointing down and sides passing through the ends of base of G and C2. (The circle is not mentioned.)
- J. Produce base of C1/G both ways to form base of triangle J with apex pointing up and sides passing through the ends of base of F and A2.
- F1. Produce sides of F to meet horizontal through apex of E.
- G1. Produce sides of G to meet horizontal through apex of D.
- A3. Produce sides of A to meet horizontal through apex of G.
- C3. Produce sides of C to meet horizontal through apex of F.

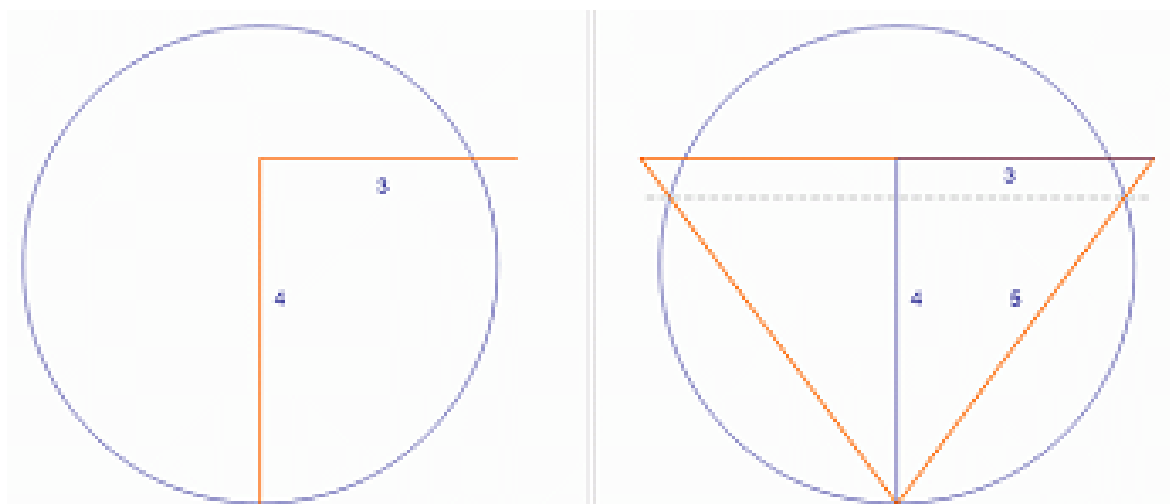
How to Draw the Sri Yantra - based on Patrick Flanagan method.

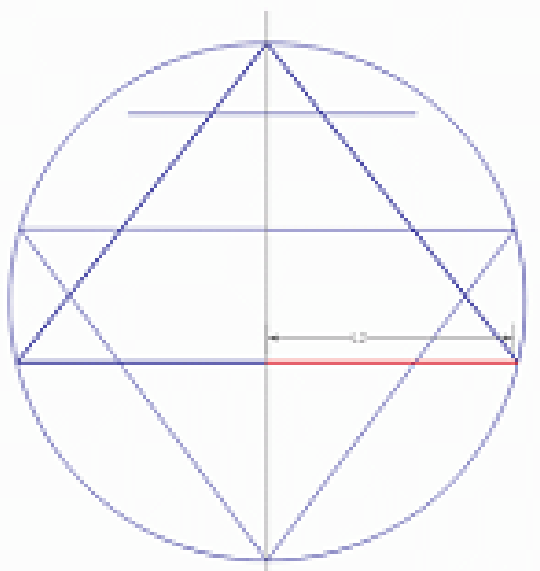
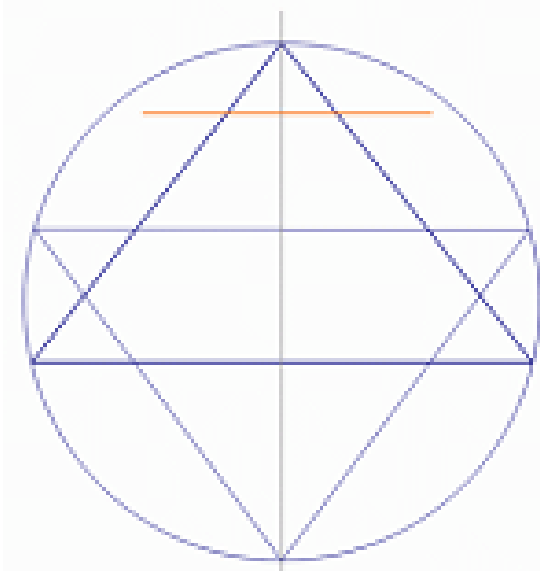
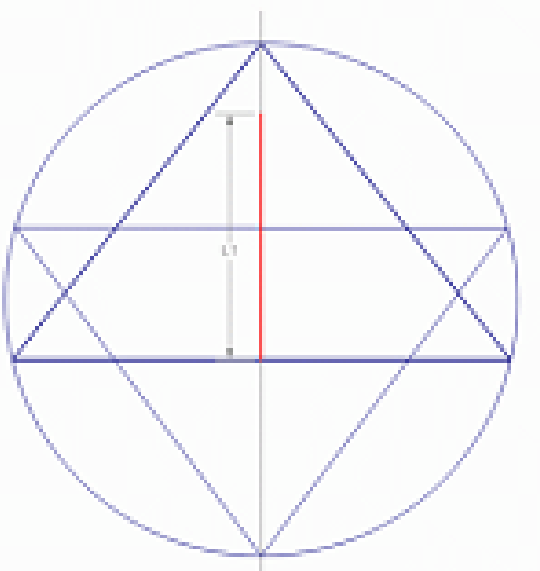
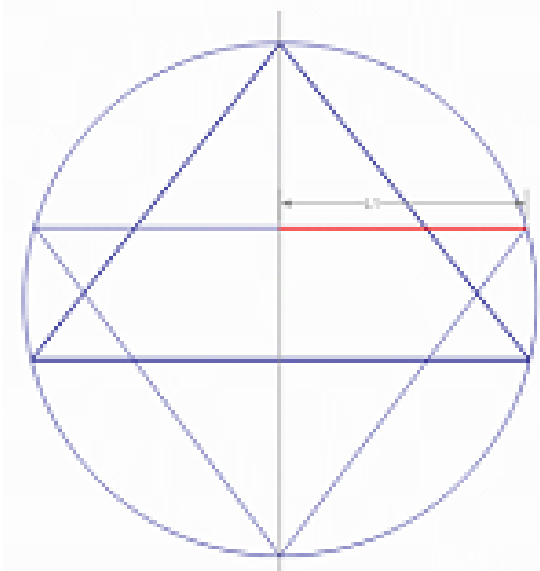
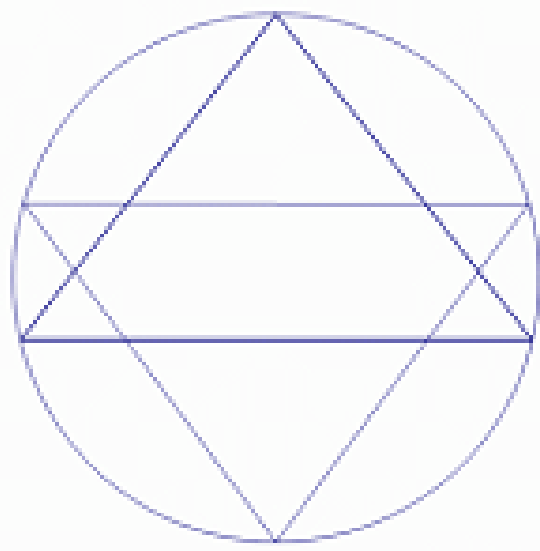
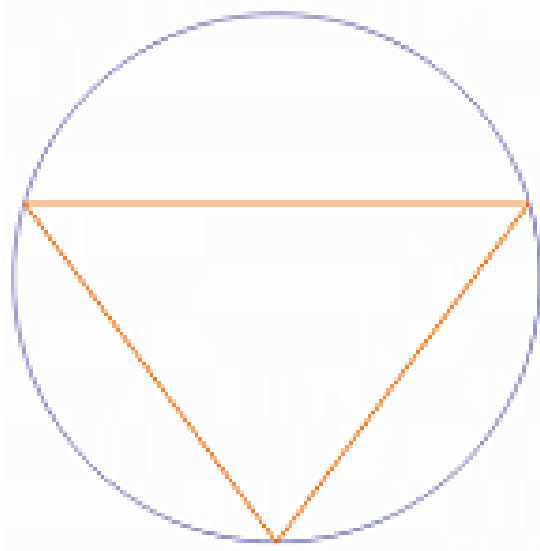
This method was devised by Patrick Flanagan many years ago. It leads to a fairly precise Sri Yantra. I have added additional steps so that it can be drawn with a minimum of measurements. It is possible that way to draw it using only a straight edge and a compass.

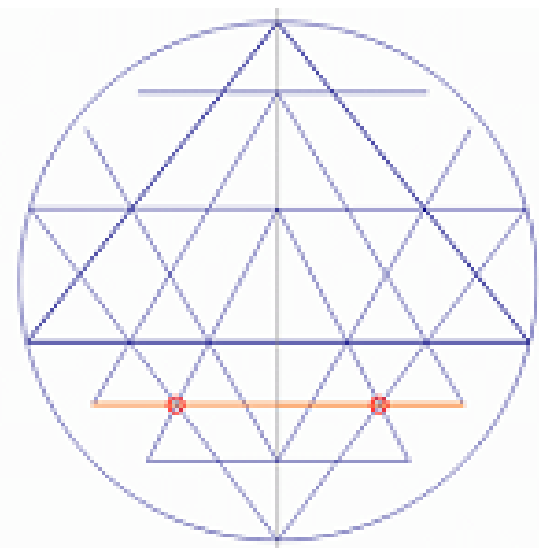
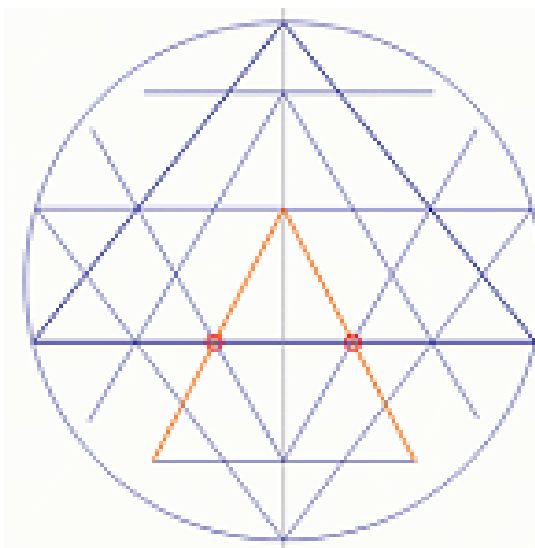
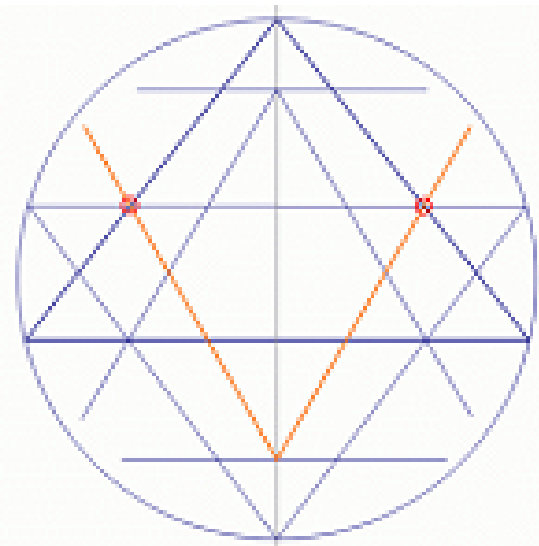
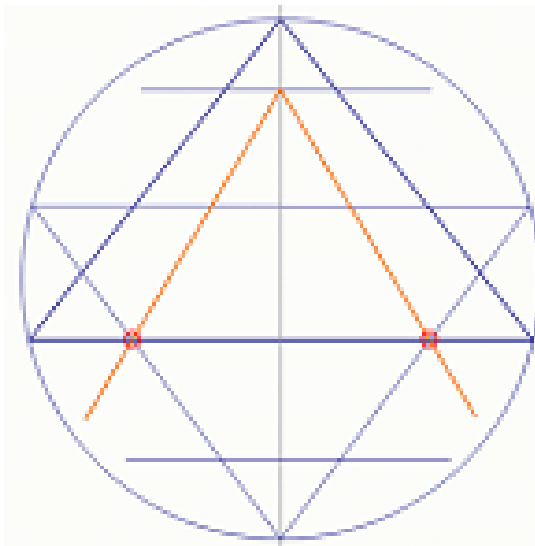
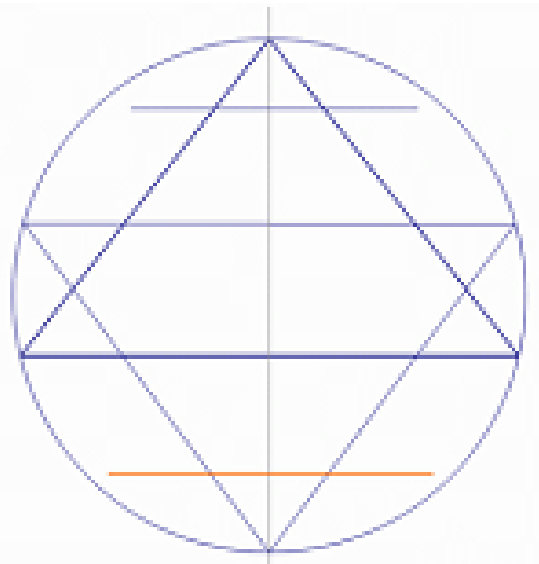
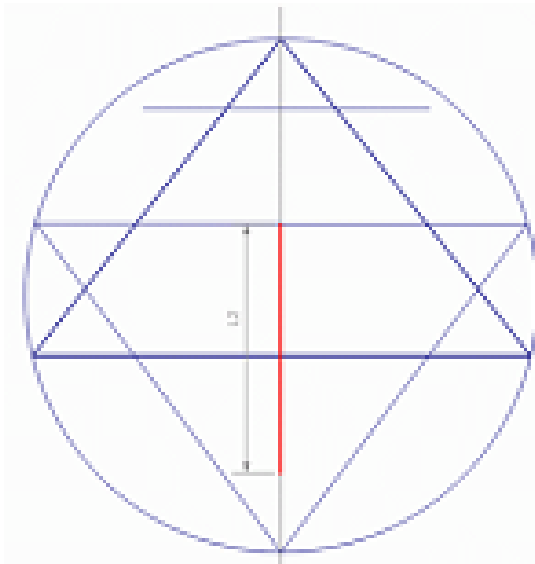
The First step is to draw a golden ratio triangle.

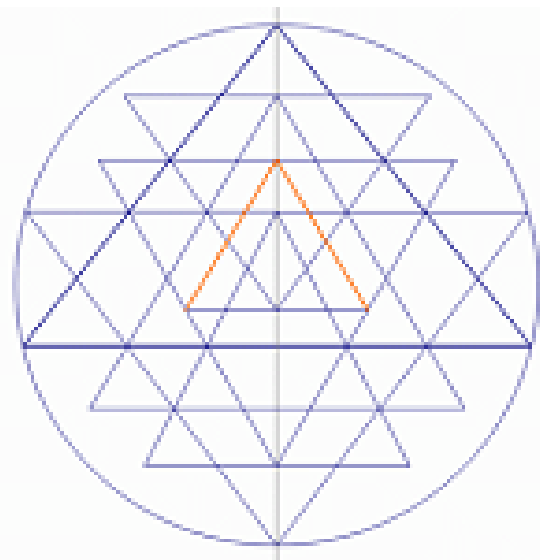
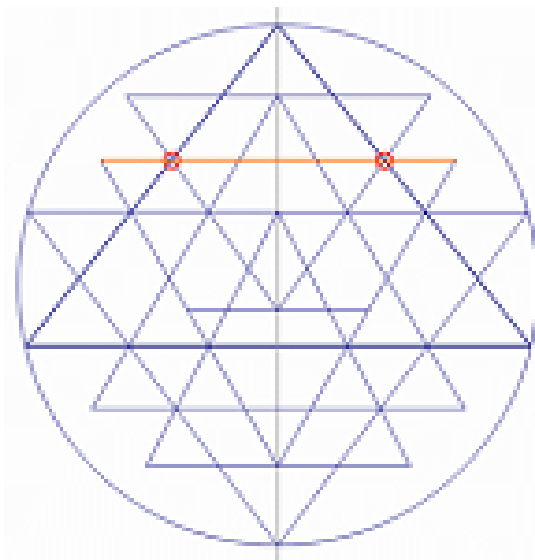
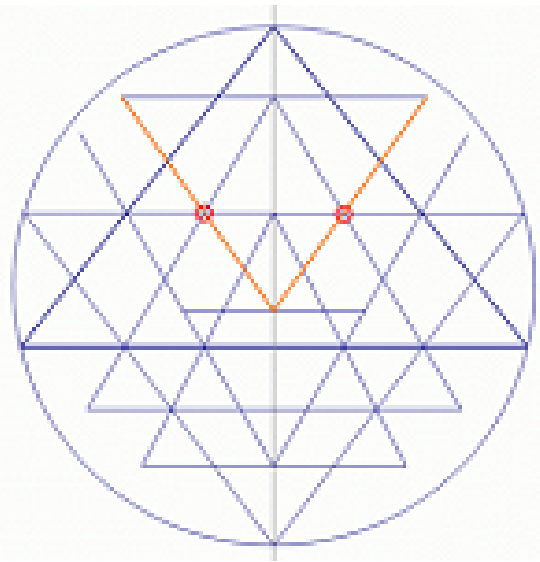
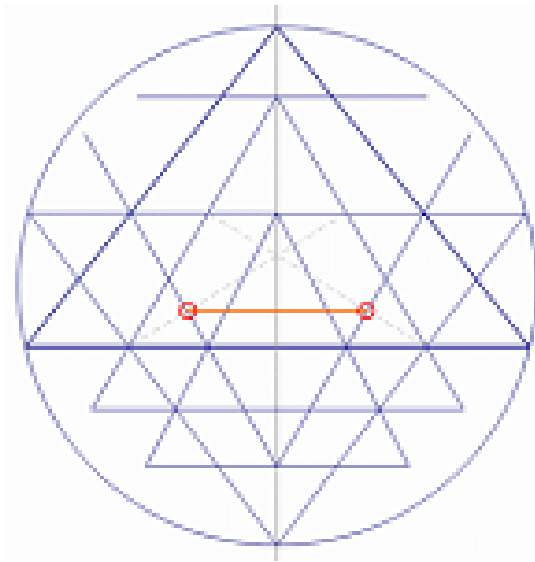


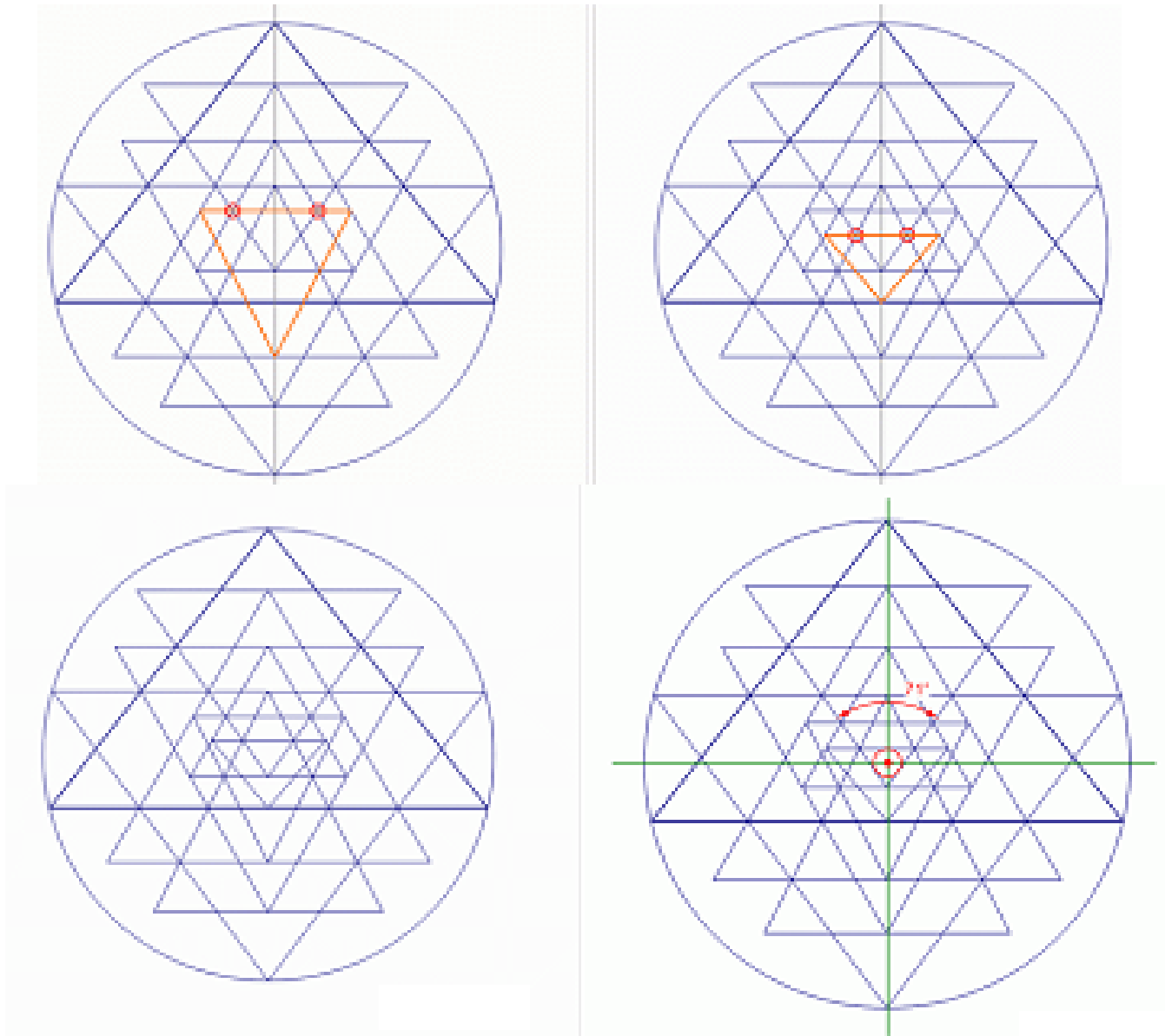
The next step is to draw a 3-4-5 triangle.





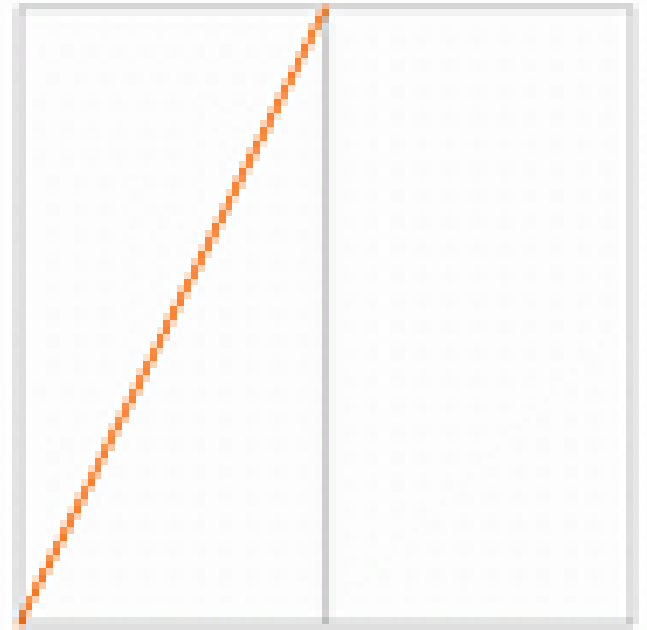
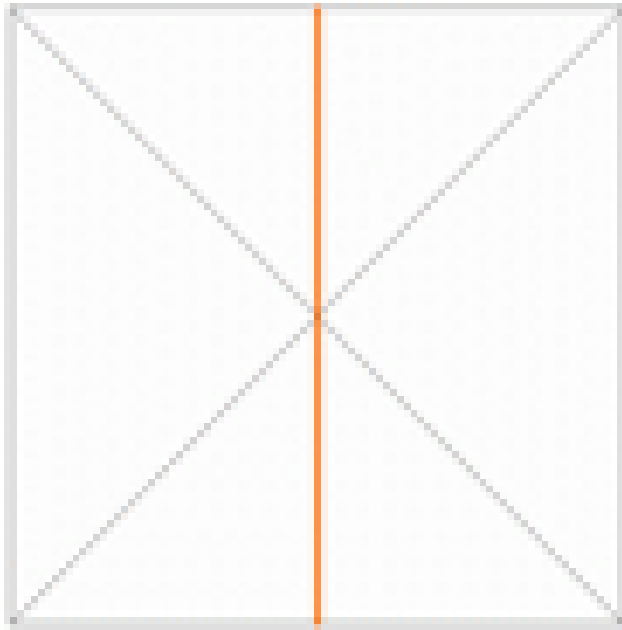
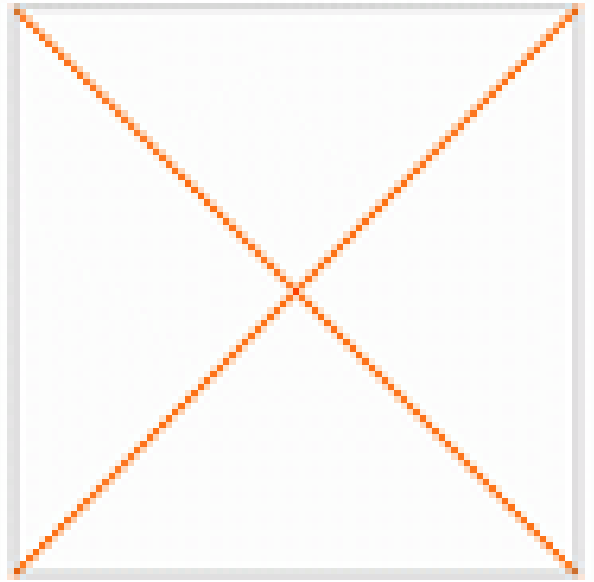
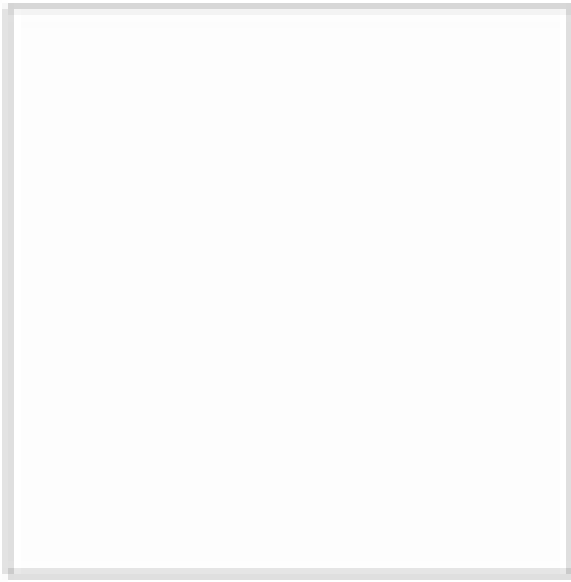


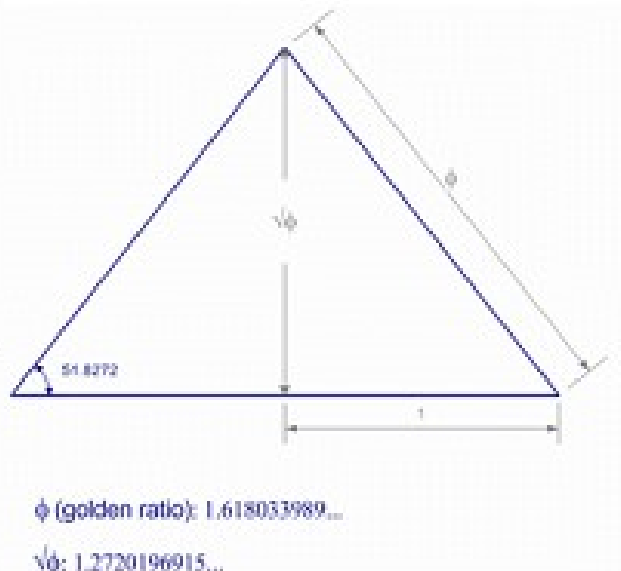
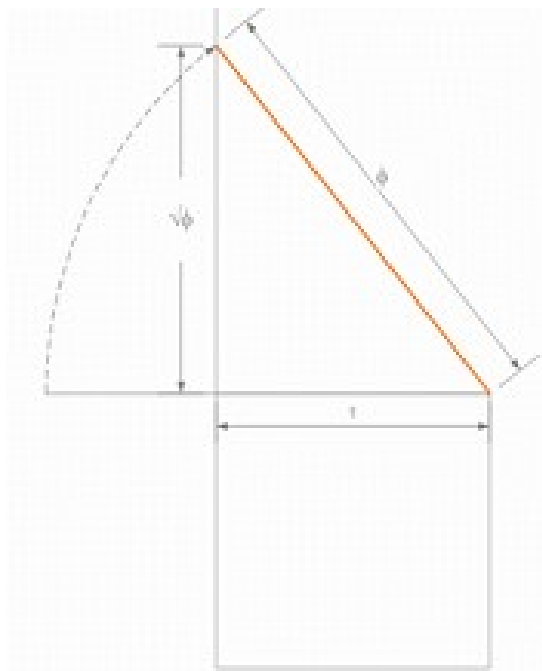
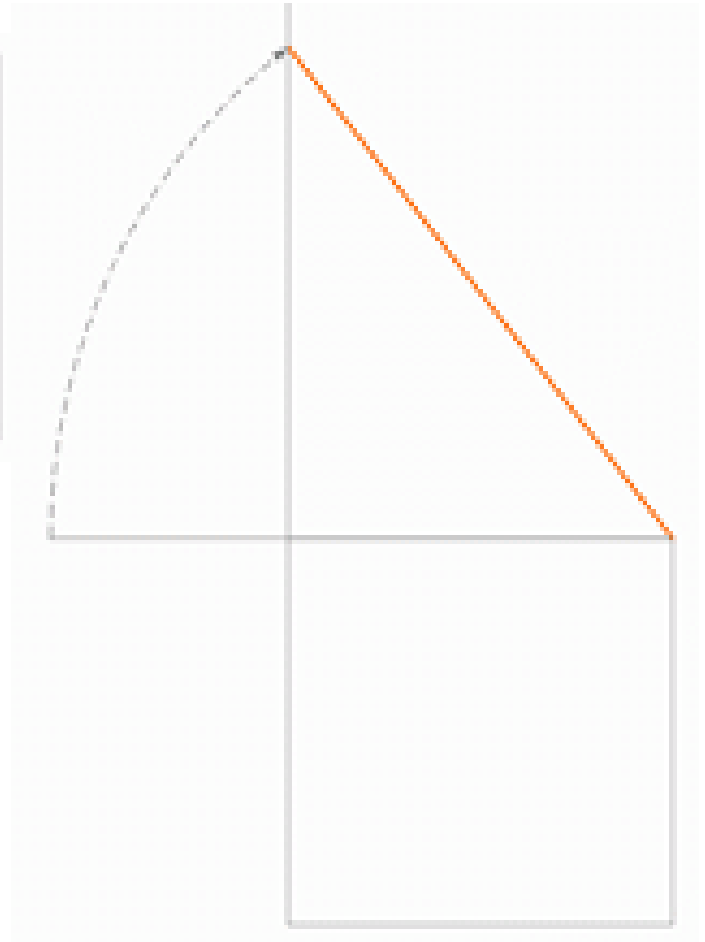
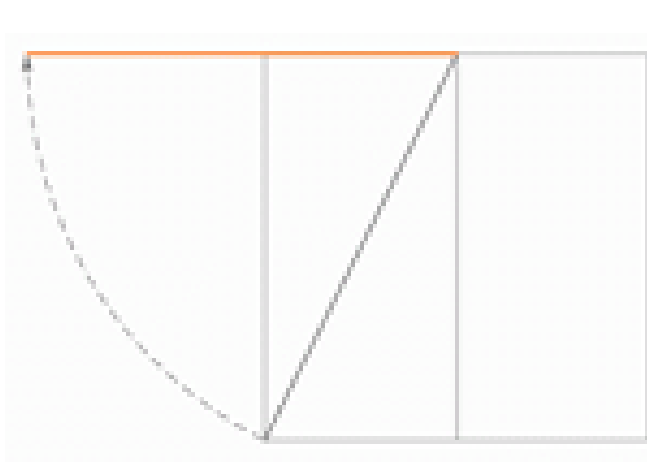




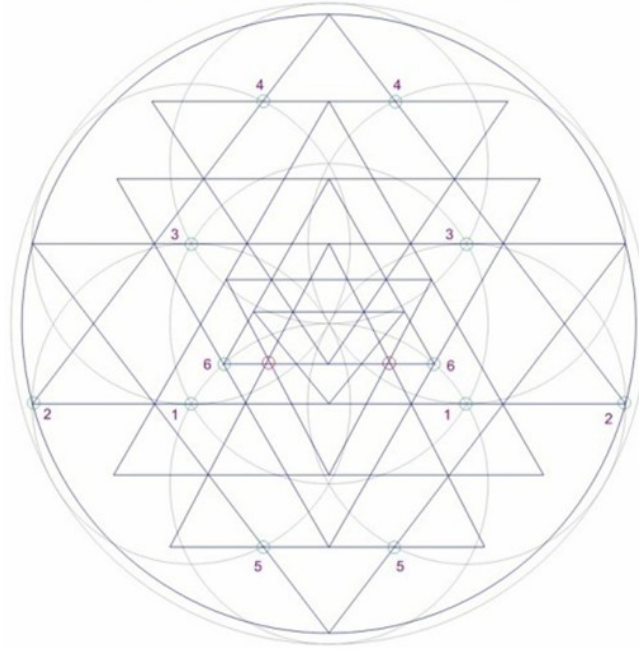
How to Draw a Golden Ratio triangle.

This method will allow you to draw a precise golden ratio triangle, similar to the great pyramid of egypt with only a straight edge and a compass. This triangle is used in the construction of the Sri Yantra when using Patrick Flanagan's method.

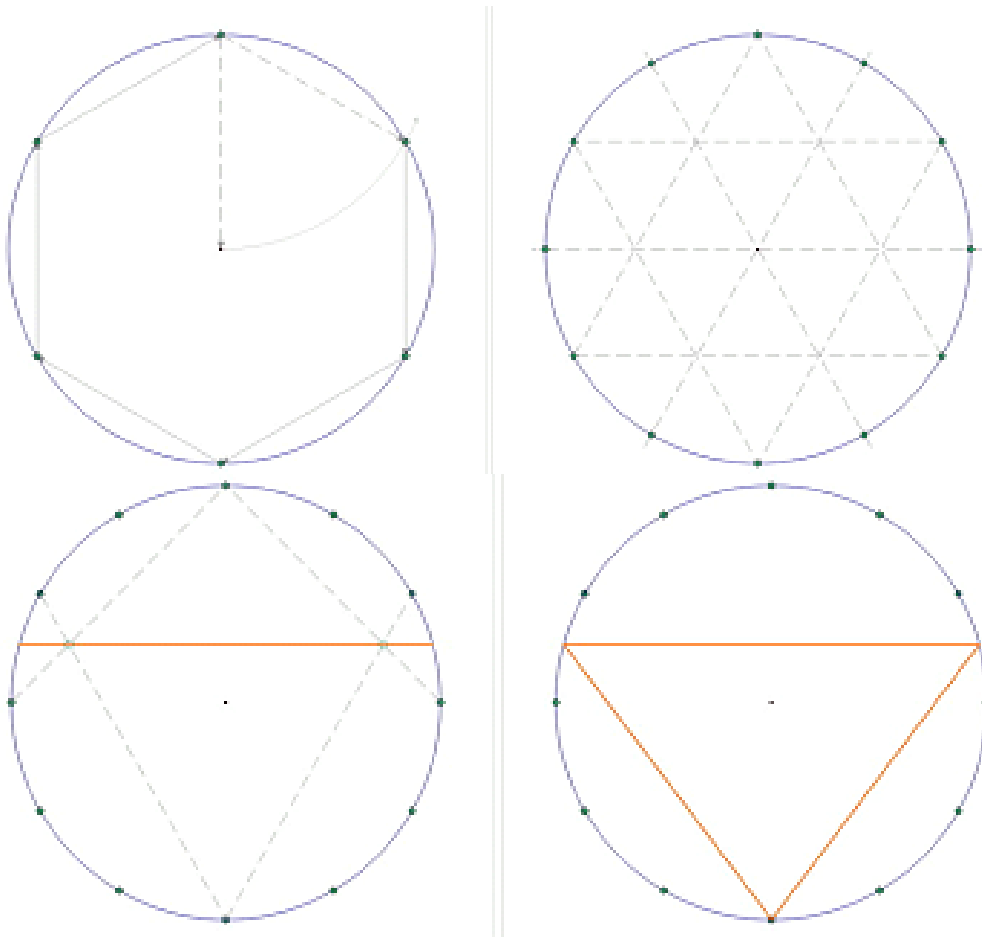


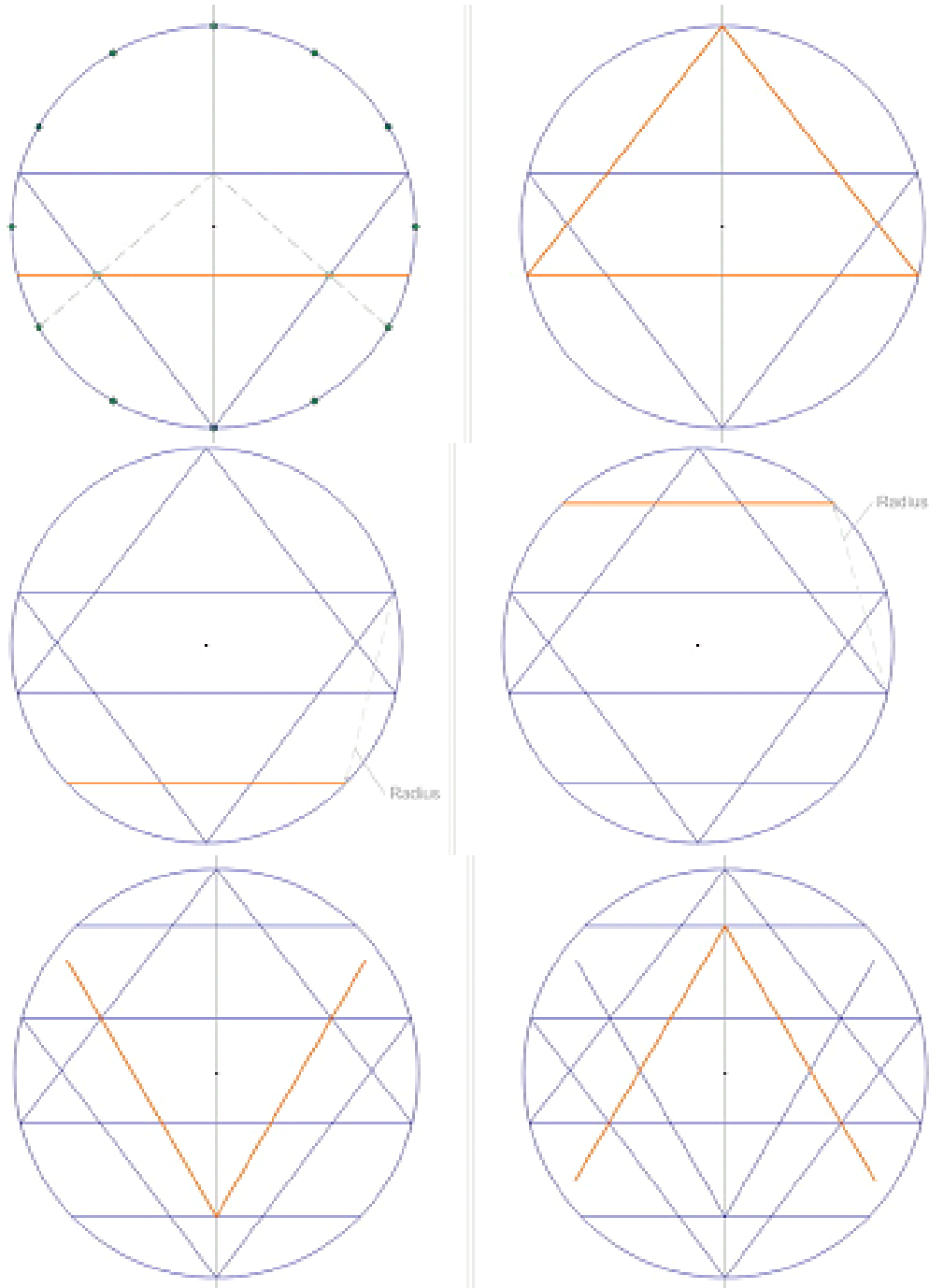


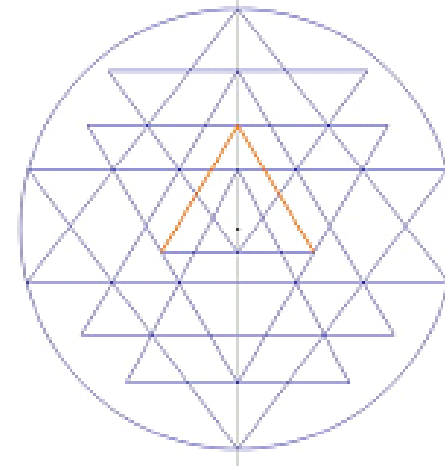
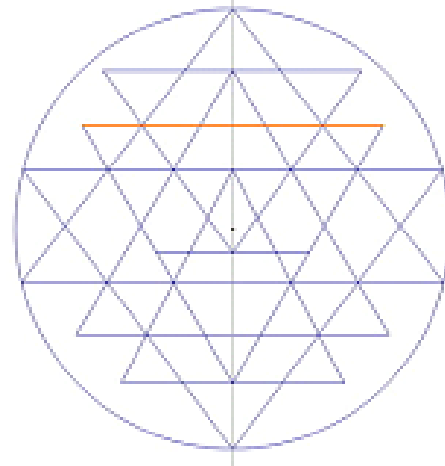
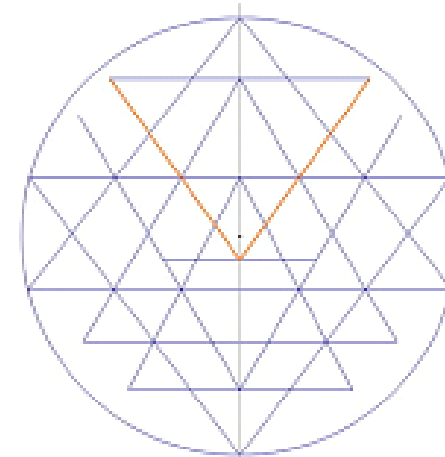
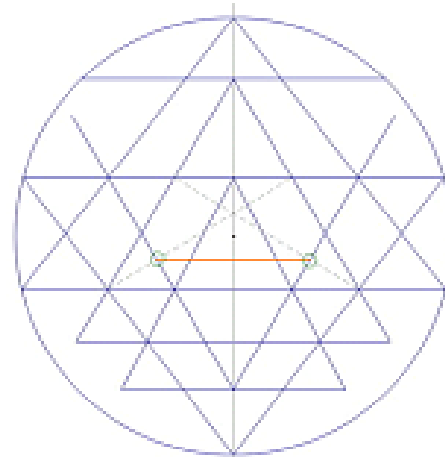
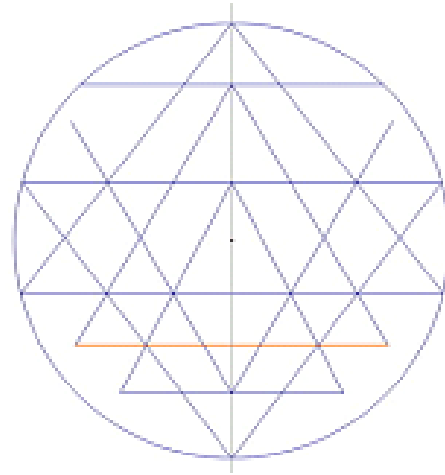
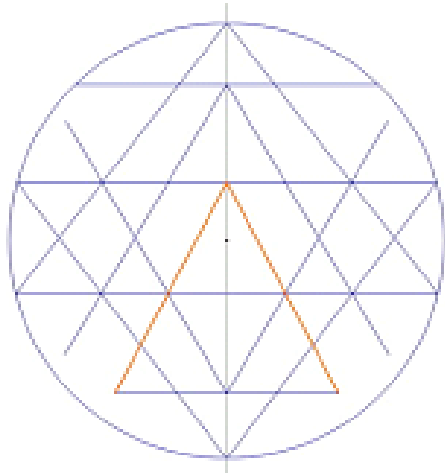
Sri Yantra from Seed of Life Lori LaPage

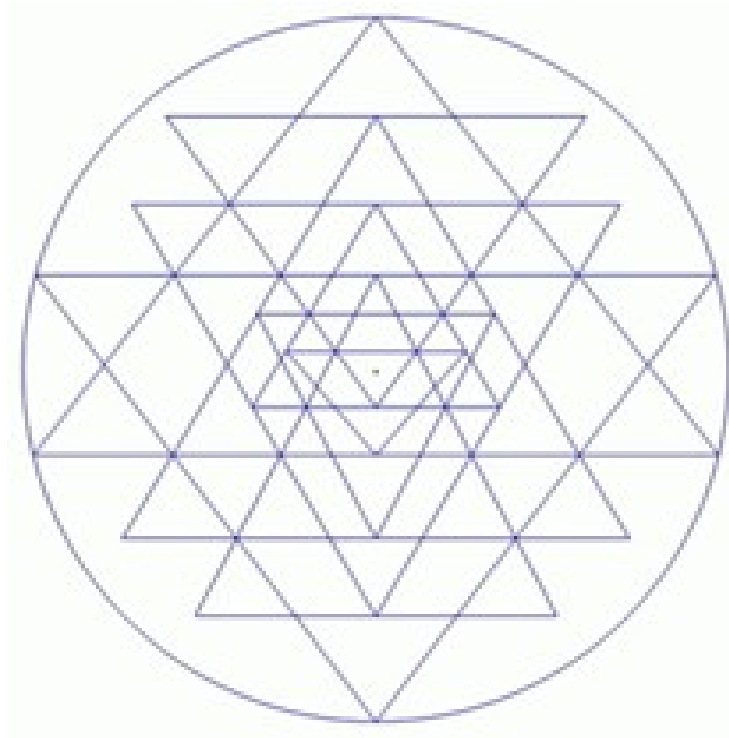
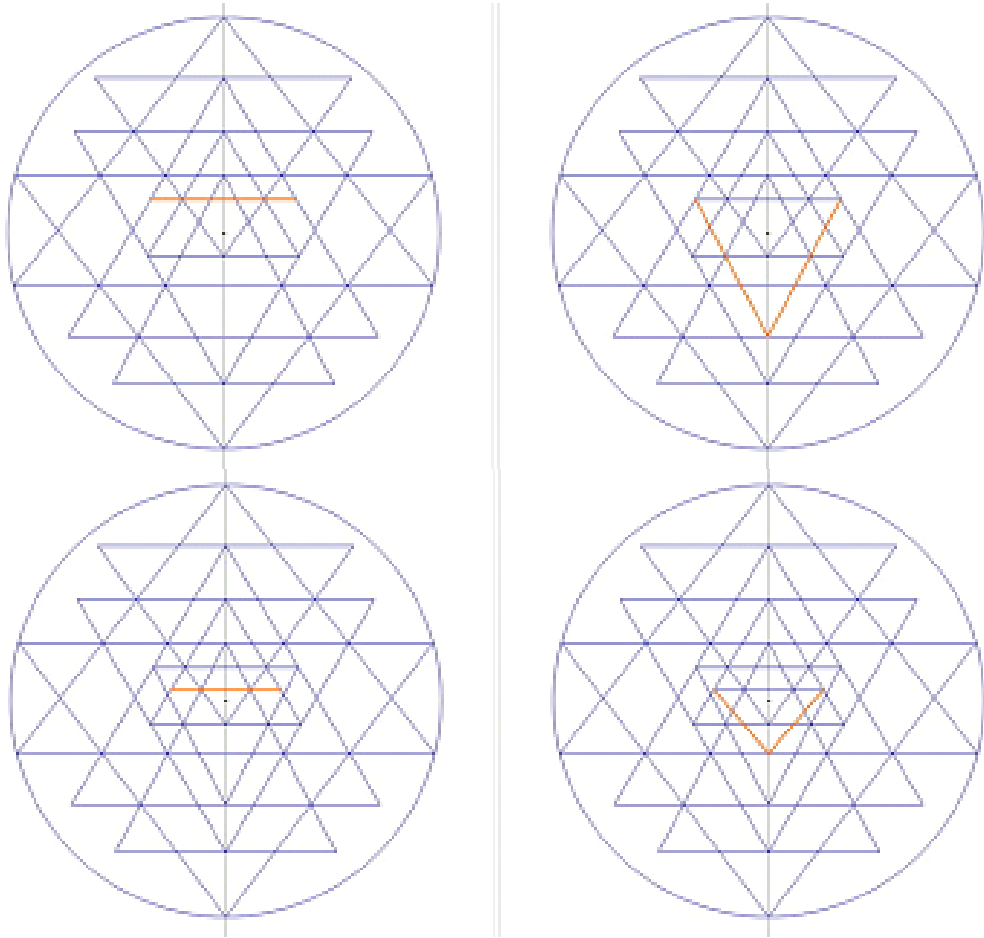


A very elegant geometric solution to draw the Sri Yantra.



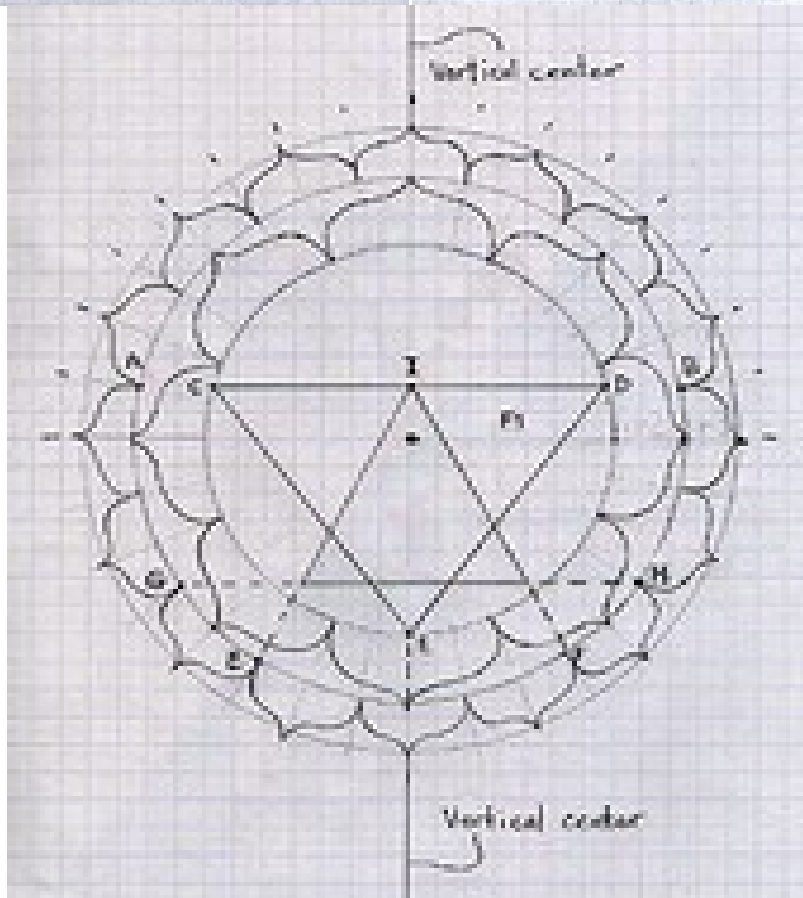
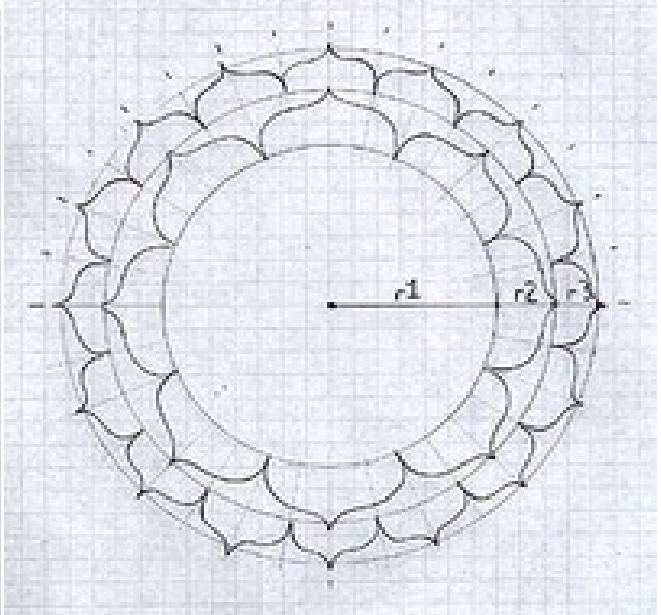
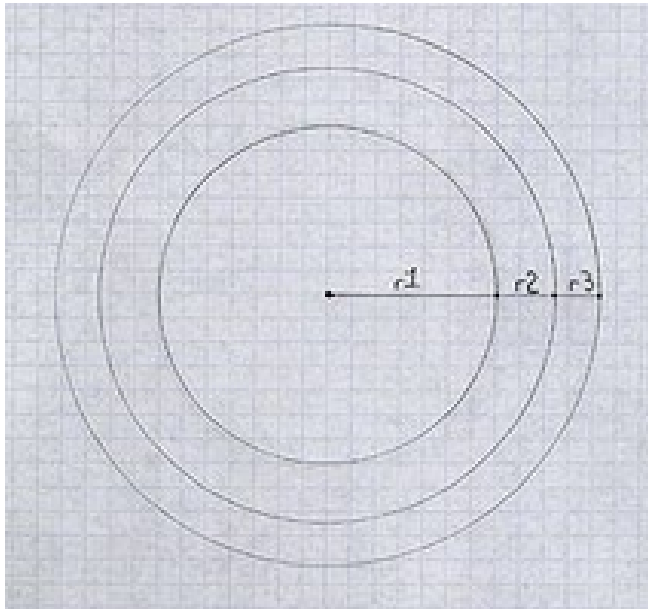


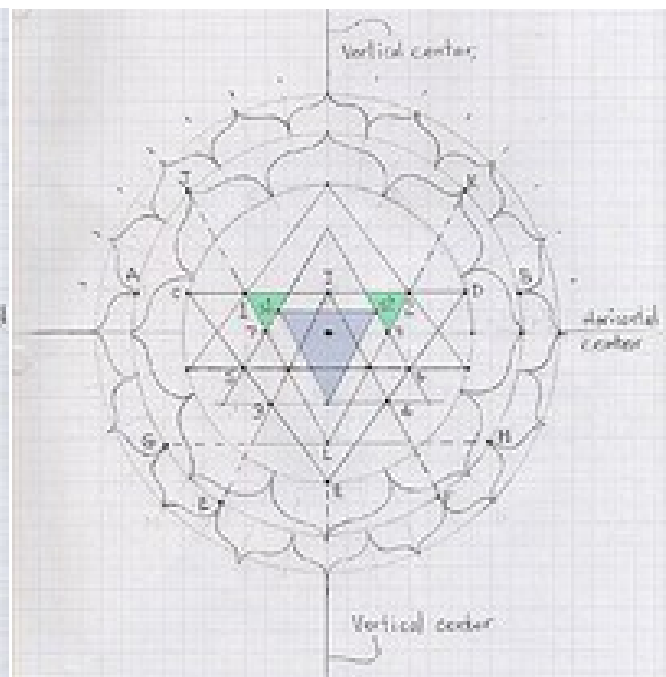
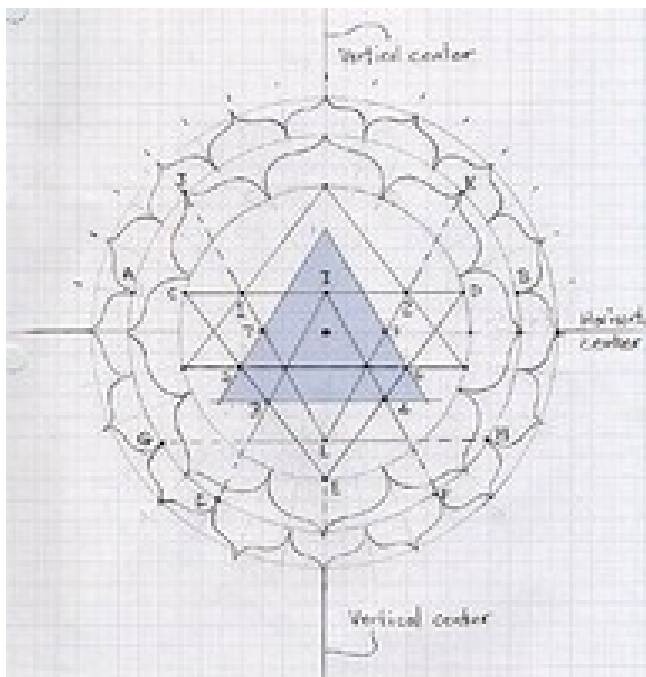
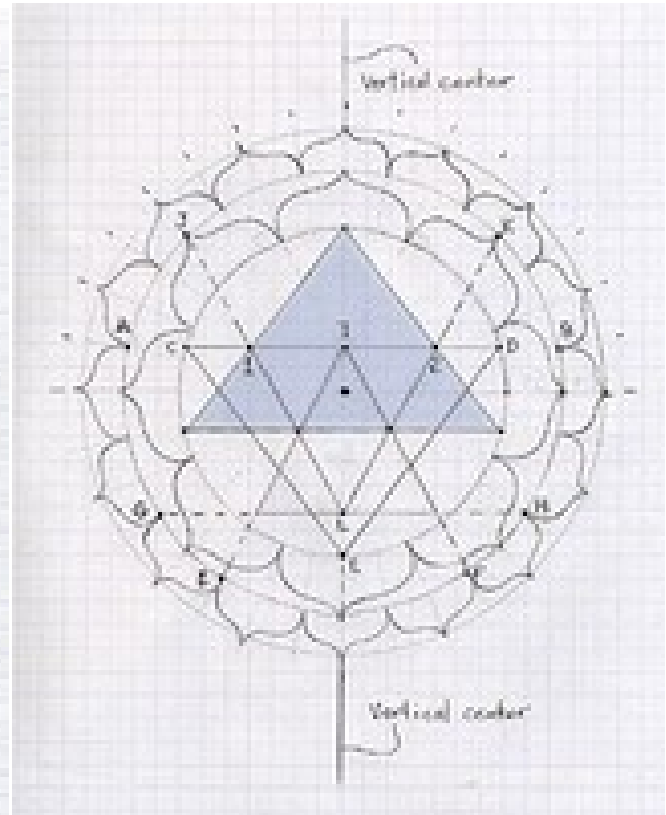
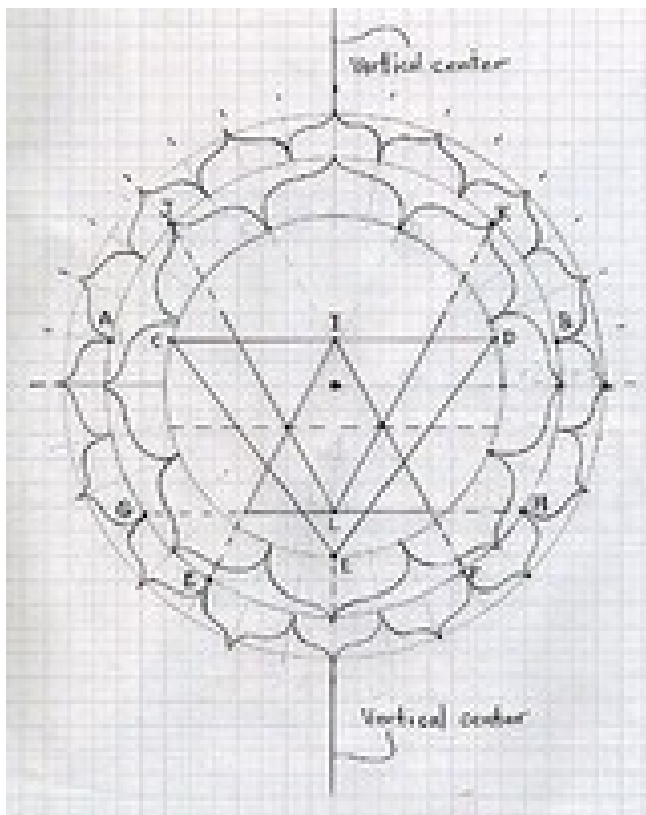


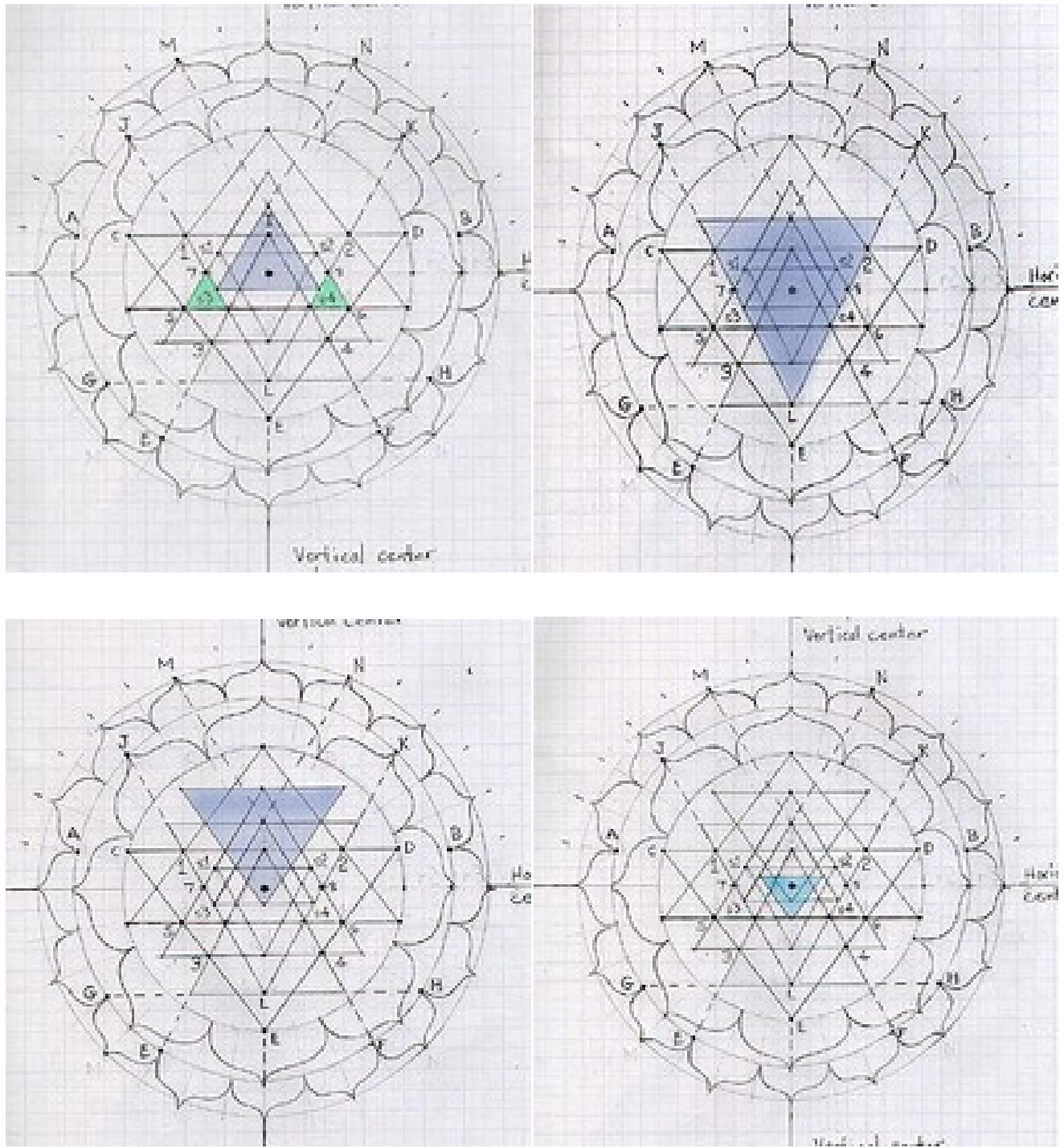


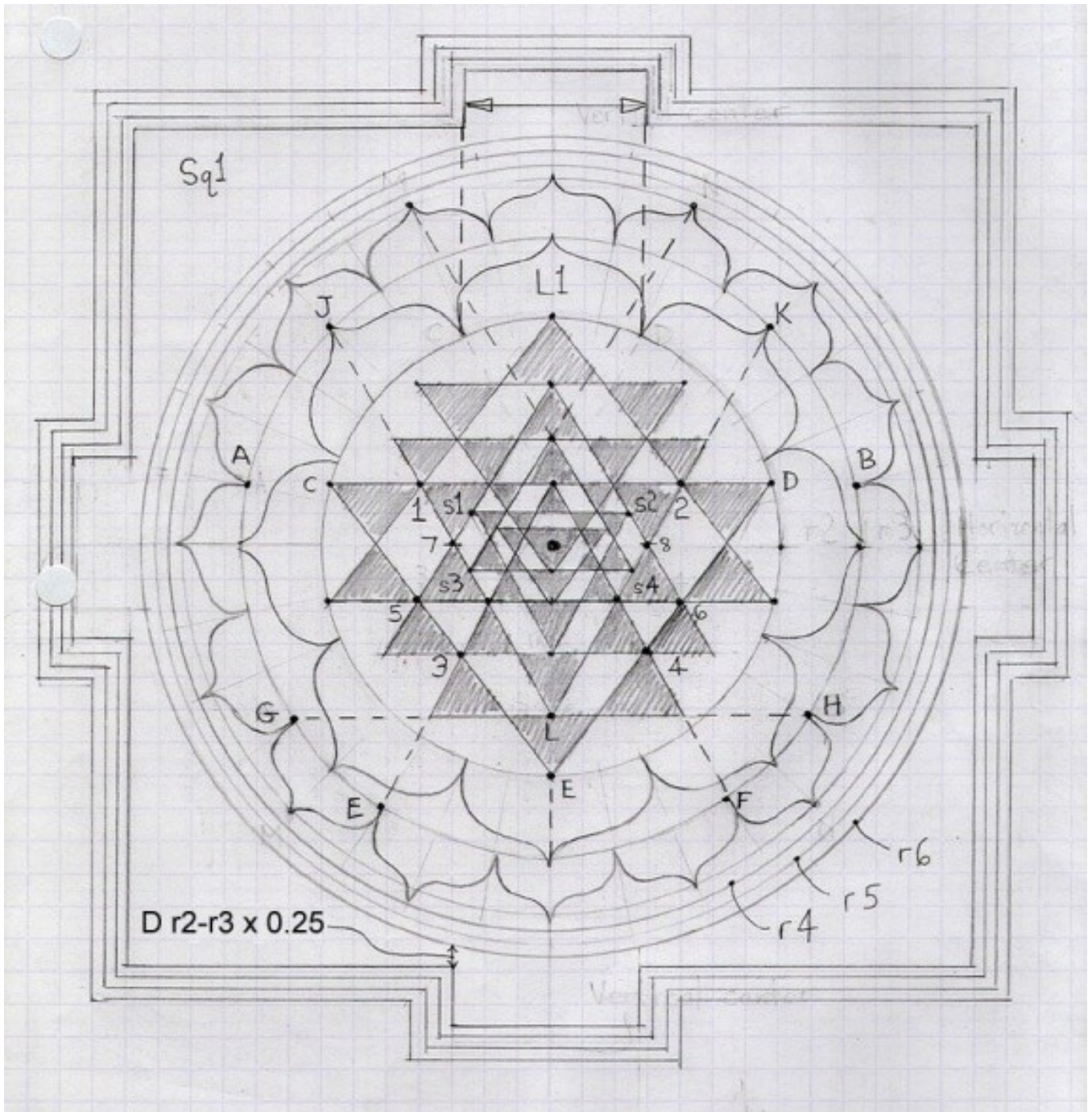
Analysis of Vishvamitra Drawing Method

A method for drawing the Sri Yantra is described here



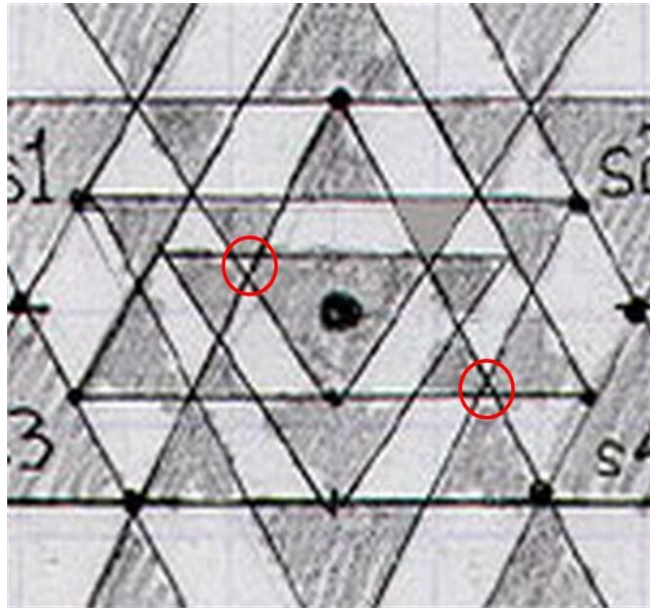






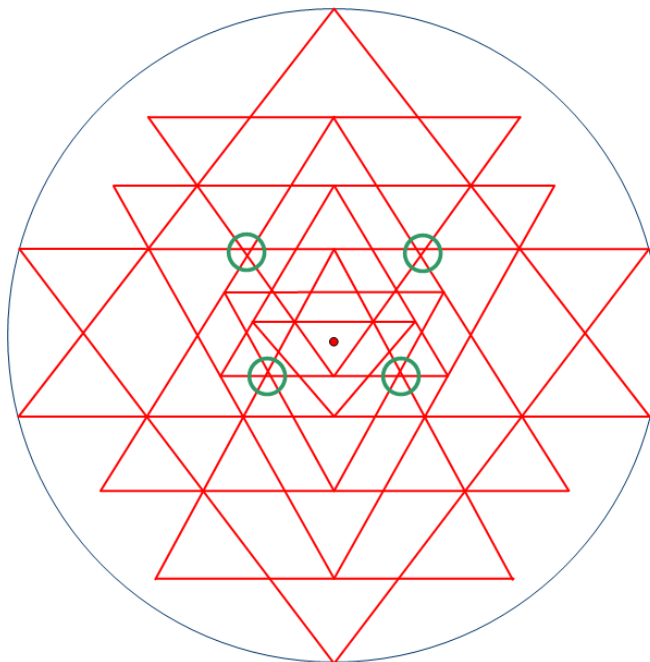
The method is very elegant but unfortunately it doesn't produce a very accurate Sri Yantra.

Zooming on the central part of the figure we can see that the mistakes at the crossing points are significant.



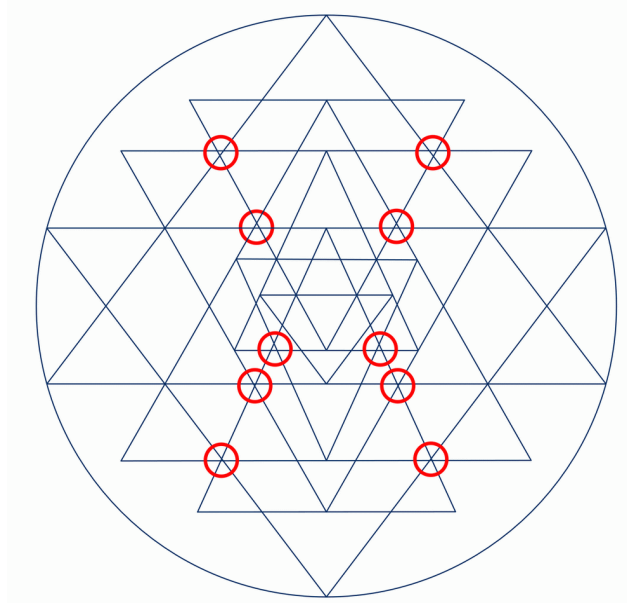
But a hand drawn figure is not very precise to start with so I used Visio to achieve a greater accuracy.

The resulting figure is shown below:



We can see clearly that this method leads to significant errors at the intersections. Better results would be obtained if the method followed the drawing sequence shown here. The proper drawing method will ensure that there are errors only at two of the intersections.

Here is the result of this method:



We see that this method results in a very imprecise figure with many errors at the intersections.

This method doesn't use the proper sequence for drawing the figure, which is why there are so many errors at the intersections.

Solving the Sri Yantra



The Quest for the Optimal Configuration

Nine Triangles in a Circle

Interconnections

The First Key: Concurrency

The One and the Many

The Second Key: Concentricity

The Third Key: Equilateral Inner Triangle

Center of Mass

The Sri Yantra from Sringeri Temple

The Three Flavors of the Sri Yantra

The Optimal Sri Yantra

The Quest for the Optimal Configuration

If you have ever attempted to draw this figure you already know that it is a lot more difficult to draw than you might have thought at first. The reason for this is mainly because the triangles are interconnected. If you move one, you need to move all the others so that they will intersect properly. With enough time or with the aid of computers and mathematics it is possible to draw a figure where the intersections match perfectly.

But it turns out that this is not enough to fully define the figure. This criteria in itself is not enough to produce a unique figure. This is the reason why there are so many different versions of the Sri Yantra in circulation.

Surprisingly the methods that we have found in the Indian literature are far from satisfactory. They often lead to very imprecise and crude figures. They only provide

a rough idea of what the figure should look like. Contemporary methods can lead to more precise figures but they are all slightly or greatly different.

This begs the question: what is the proper configuration of the Sri Yantra?

The goal of this article is to investigate the geometry of the Sri Yantra and see if we can find out more about this fascinating sacred figure.

Nine Triangles in a Circle

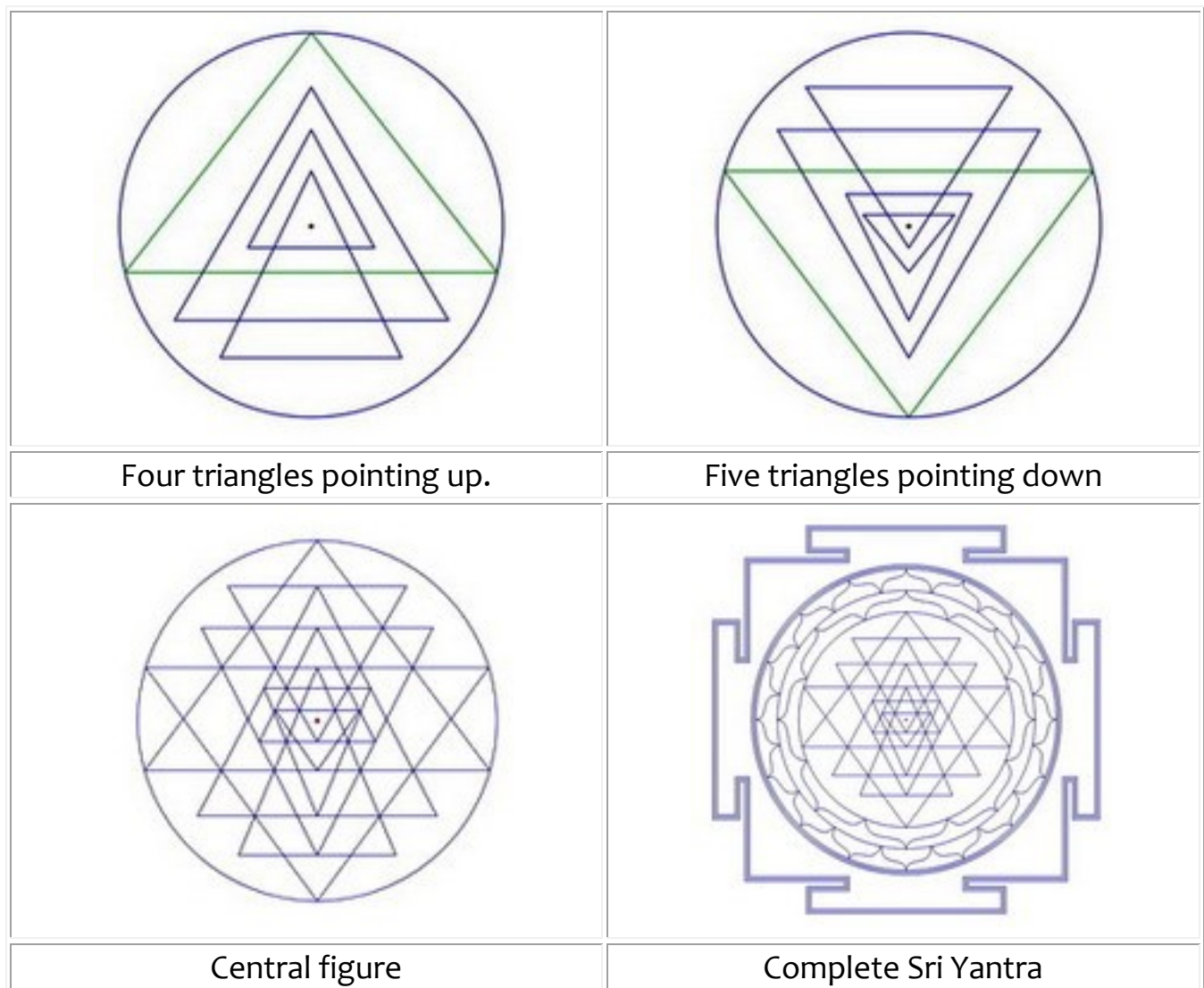


Figure 1

The Sri Yantra is composed of a central figure that is surrounded by two circular rows of petals and then by a rectangular enclosure called the bhupura.

In this study we will be focusing mainly on the central figure which is composed of nine overlapping triangles and a bindu point. Four of the triangles point up, the other five point down. In the most popular configuration the two biggest triangles (green triangles in figure 1) touch the outer circle on all three points.

In some other versions there are either one or two more triangles that touch the outer circle (See figure 5).

Interconnections

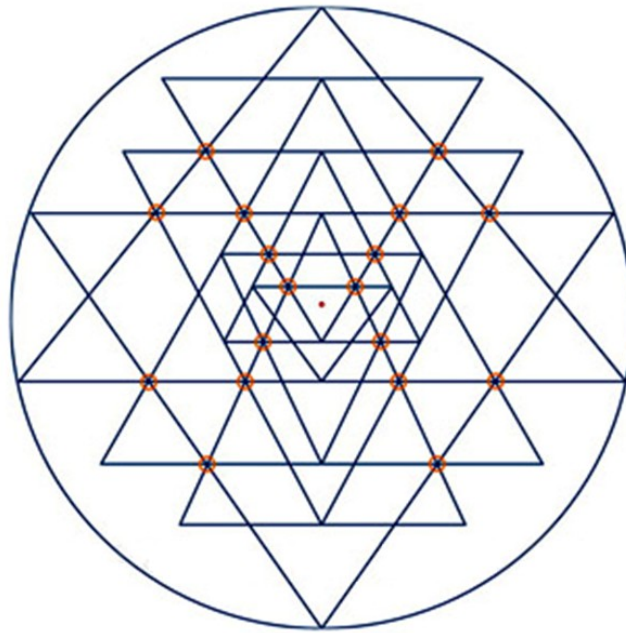


Figure 2 Triple intersections.

When looking at the figure we notice that there is a **high degree of interconnectedness** between the nine triangles. **This the main reason why it is so difficult to draw.** This means that every triangle is connected to one or more of the other triangles via common points. Changing the location of one of the triangle usually requires changing the size and position of many other triangles.

Figure 2 shows where the triple intersection points are located. These are the points that lock together the triangles. You can't move one without also moving the others.

Notice also that the two biggest triangles are touching the outside circle on three points and that the apex of every triangle is connected to the base of another triangle.

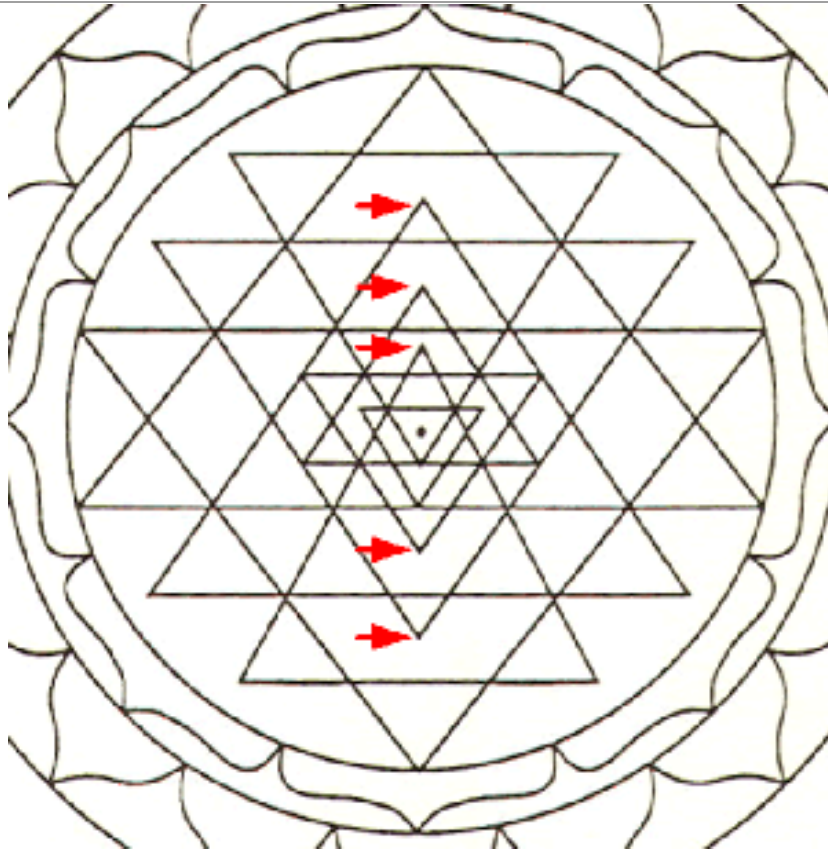


Figure 3 False Sri Yantra

As with everything else there is a **tendency to simplify and/or distort things** , so that over time knowledge gets eroded. In the case of the Sri Yantra this has led to what some call the "false Sri Yantra". It's a version that is so far from the original figure that it is missing some of the most basic characteristic of a Sri Yantra. An example of such a false Sri Yantra is shown in figure 3. Here we see that the apex of most triangle is not connected with the base of another triangle as indicated by the red arrows. This reduces greatly the difficulty of drawing the figure and leads to something that looks like a Sri Yantra but isn't.

The First Key: Concurrency

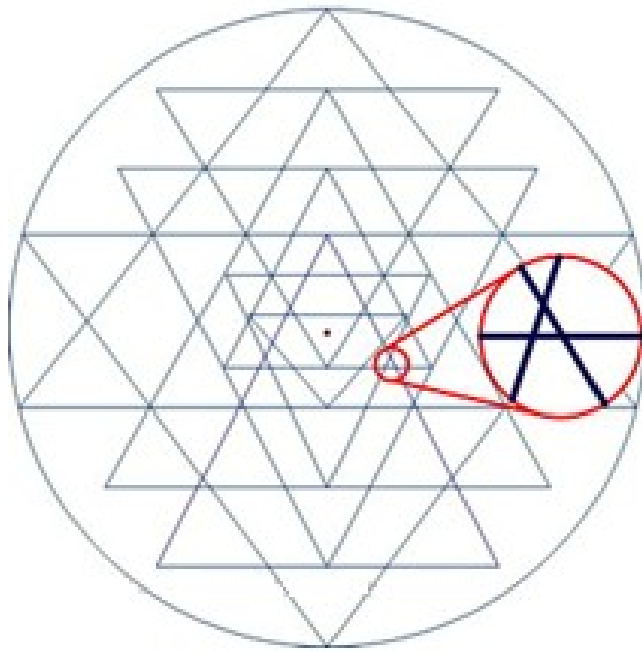


Figure 4 Errors in the drawing will lead to extraneous secondary triangles.

The obvious challenge when drawing a Sri Yantra is to achieve near perfect concurrency. Meaning that all the triple intersection meet at the same point rather than crisscrossing.

Figure 4 shows a detail of a Sri Yantra with the error circled in red. The lines should intersect at the same point but instead they crisscross each other and form an extraneous triangle. Using the right sequence to draw the Sri Yantra will ensure that there will be errors only in two of the triple intersections.

Very few Sri Yantras achieve perfect concurrency. Mathematically speaking it is not possible. But practically speaking a satisfactory level of precision can be achieved. It is difficult to achieve this when doing the drawing by hand but not impossible. Often the lines are made thicker to hide the errors at the intersections. A good level of accuracy can be achieved with a pencil and ruler and a lot of patience. A better accuracy can be achieved with a drawing program such as AutoCAD or Visio. The greatest amount of accuracy will be achieved by using a mathematical program such as Mathematica to compute the figure.

The One and the Many

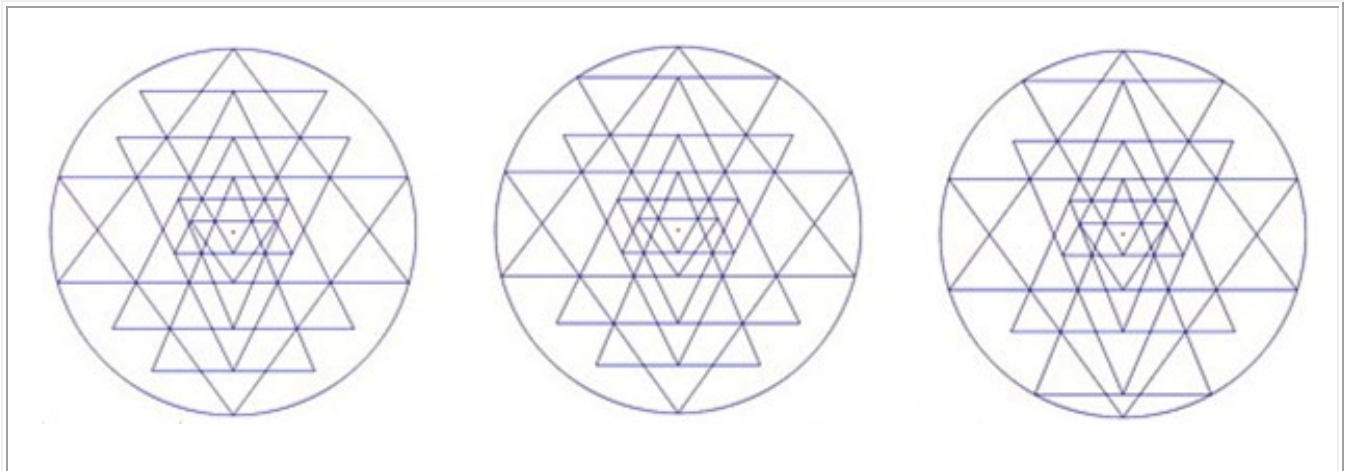


Figure 5 Three different configurations of the Sri Yantra.

It would seem at this point that all one needs to do is to make sure that the lines match precisely at the triple intersections (concurrency) and our job is done. Not so!

Why are there so many different versions of the Sri Yantra out there? Figure 5 shows a few examples of Sri Yantras. In these examples the differences are obvious. The differences are usually more subtle and require closer examination. Like snow flakes there seems to be an infinite number of different Sri Yantras. Why is that? How can that be? Isn't there a **precise and complete** method that would tell us how this famous sacred figure should be drawn? If there is one we haven't found it yet.

The reason is simple. **The criteria of concurrency** (precise intersections) **is not enough to fully define the Sri Yantra**. Over time people have assumed that being able to produce a figure where the lines meet precisely at the intersections will produce a unique figure. This has led to the current multiplicity of figures available.

Let us take the simple example of drawing a triangle. If the only criteria required is that the figure must have three sides then you can draw a infinite number of different triangles with three sides. If on the other hand you are asked to draw a triangle where the sides are of equal length then there is only one way to draw such a triangle (not taking size into account).

The Sri Yantra is a geometry with **five degrees of freedom**, which means that up to five different criterion can be used to define it. This is why we have to decide on the

location of five lines when drawing the figure. Five degrees of freedom is not a lot considering that there is a total of nine triangles. This is because of the high degree of interconnectedness between the triangles. This effectively limits the possibilities and variations that can be achieved.

The Second Key: Concentricity

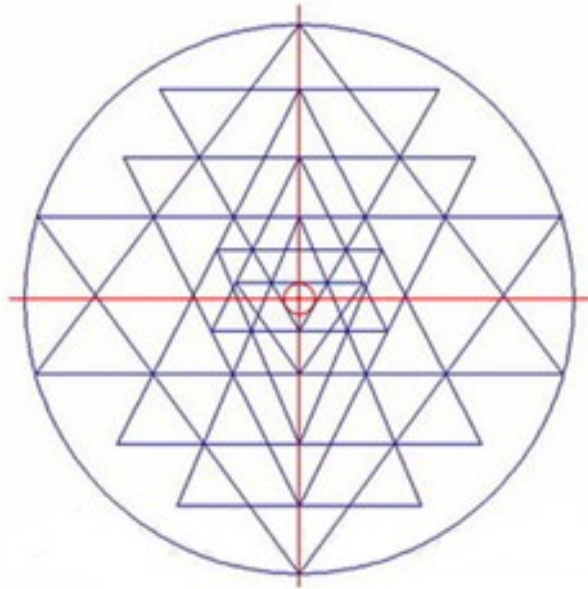


Figure 6 Concentricity: the center of the innermost triangle coincide with the center of the outer circle.

Lets now take a look at the bindu point; the small point located in the central triangle. It should be located in the center of the innermost triangle. This can be achieved precisely by placing the bindu at the center of a circle that fits inside this triangle (see figure 9). This is known in mathematics as the incenter of a triangle.

To achieve a perfectly centered figure however, the bindu should also be located at the center of the outer circle. This is illustrated in figure 6. The red cross shows where the center of the outer circle is located. The small red circle shows where the center of the innermost triangle is. As we can see in this figure they coincide. This is not the case for most Sri Yantras.

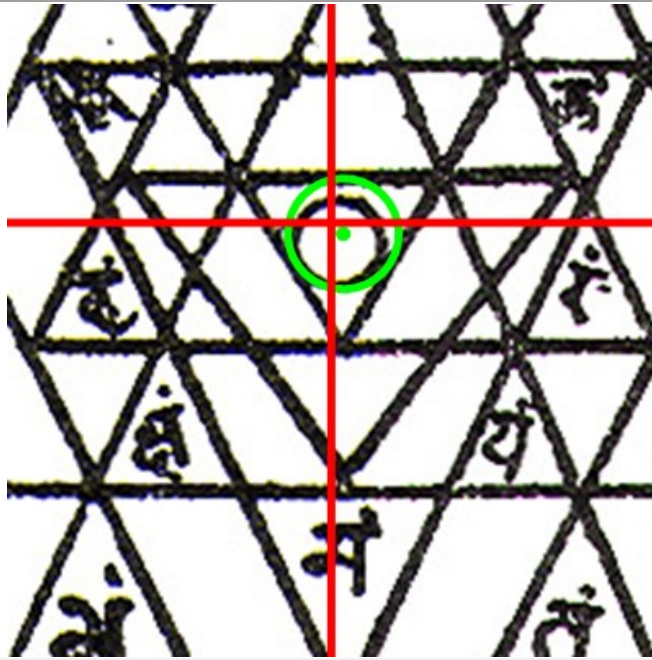


Figure 7 Sri Yantra that doesn't meet the concentricity criteria.

Figure 7 shows an example of a Sri Yantra where the center of the innermost triangle doesn't match perfectly with the center of the outer circle. The green dot (center of the innermost triangle) is not aligned with the center of the red cross (center of the outer circle).

The Third Key: Equilateral Inner Triangle

The equilateral triangle is a perfect and minimal structure. It is the simplest, strongest and most fundamental structure in geometry and computer graphics. It has the highest degree of tensegrity for a minimum amount of structural elements. That is why it is so prevalent in the structural designs created by Buckminster Fuller. This is also why the geodesic dome, a spherical structure composed of small triangles is the only man-made structure that becomes proportionally stronger as it increases in size.

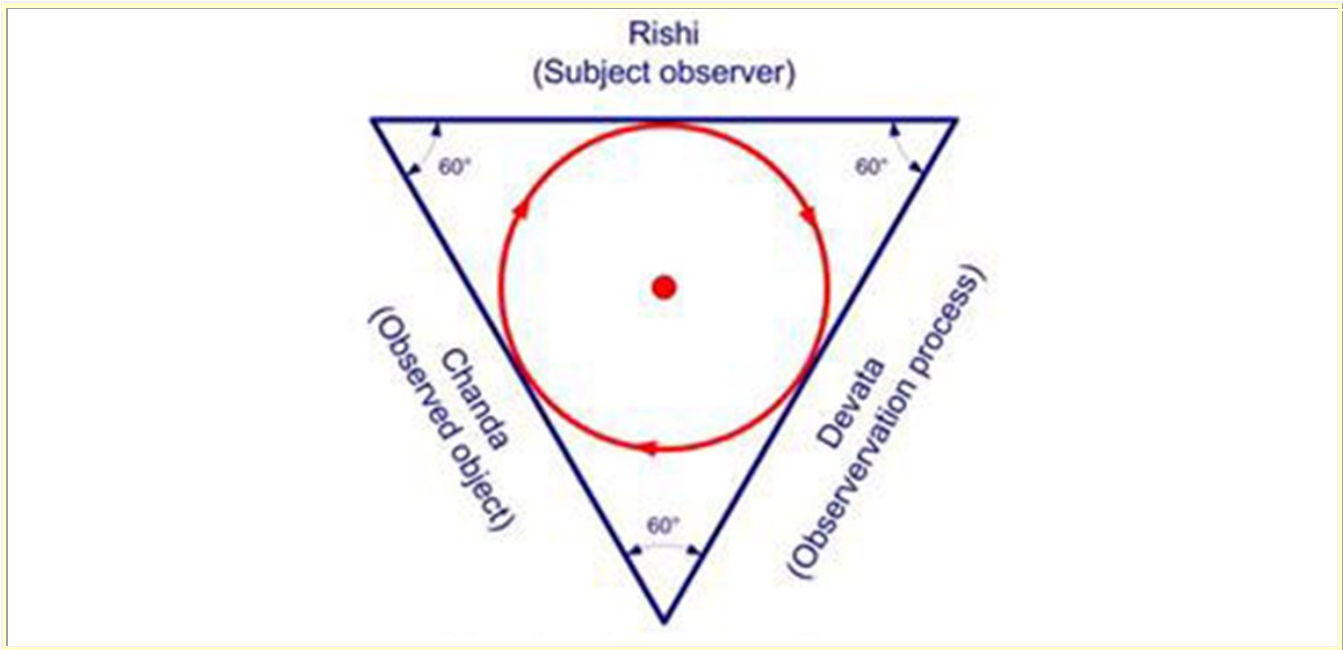


Figure 9 Equilateral triangle as the expression of Rishi, Devata, Chanda.

The Sri Yantra symbolizes, among other things the unfoldment of creation. The bindu represents the unmanifest, the silent state. The next level in the expression of the Universe is represented by the innermost triangle. This level represents the trinity of rishi, devata, chanda, or the observer, the process of observation and the object being observed. At this point the symmetry of creation is still intact and will be broken when it reaches the next level which represent the grosser aspects of the relative.

This reflects the unfoldment from unity to trinity as expounded in the Vedic literature. According to the Veda the Universe becomes manifest when unbounded awareness becomes aware of itself. The spark of self awareness ignites creation. At this point Unity divides into the trinity of rishi (the observer), devata (process of knowing) and chanda (the object of perception). The same idea is also found in the bible as the principle of the holy trinity.

The central triangle is the central lens of the Sri Yantra. If as some suggest, this pattern is capable of emitting a significant amount of subtle energy, the importance of having a well balanced and centered figure becomes obvious.

For these reasons we believe that the central triangle should be equilateral in an optimal Sri Yantra configuration. For this to happen the highest down pointing primary triangle must have an angle of 60 degrees (see figure 9 and 11).

Center of Mass

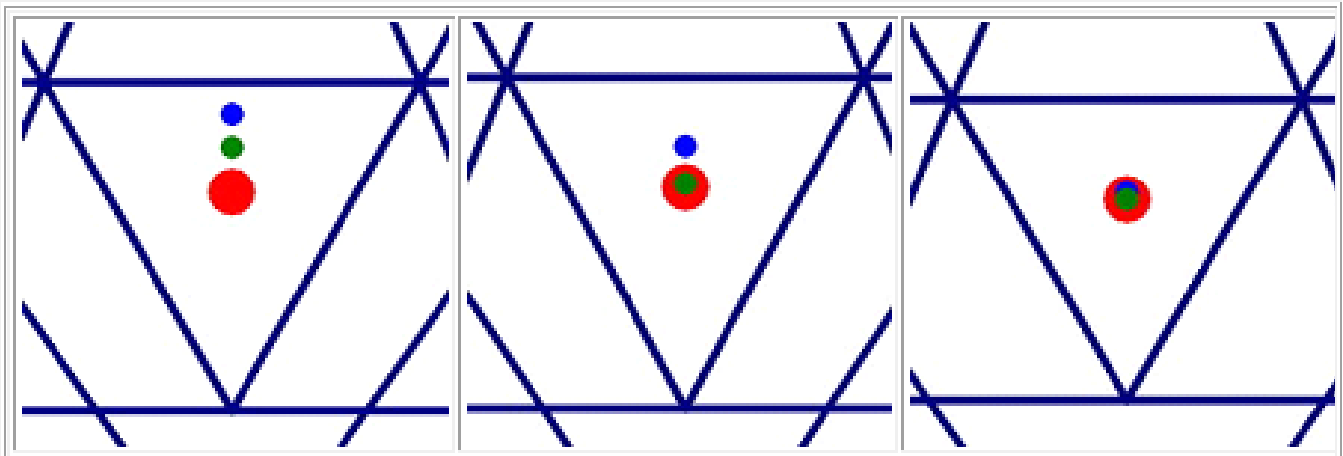


Figure 10 Left: Figure with Concurrency criteria only. Center: Figure with Concurrency and concentricity. Right: Figure with Concurrency, concentricity and equilateral central triangle.

Now let's see if we can find ways to confirm the idea that we are getting closer to a perfectly balanced configuration. Another measure of overall balance of a structure is the center of mass. This is the point in the geometry where it would balance if it was a solid object.

Figure 10 shows a detail view of the central triangle of three different Sri Yantras. The left figure shows a configuration where only **concurrency** is achieved. In this case the bindu (red dot), the center of the outer circle (green dot) and the center of mass (blue dot) are not aligned.

The central figure shows a Sri Yantra that achieves **concurrency and concentricity**. As a result the bindu (red) and the center of the outer circle (green) overlap nicely. The center of mass still doesn't overlap however.

On the right we see that for a figure drawn with the three criteria that we have suggested (**concurrency, concentricity and equilateral central triangle**), the three centers overlap and we have a perfectly centered and balanced figure.

The Sri Yantra from Sringeri Temple

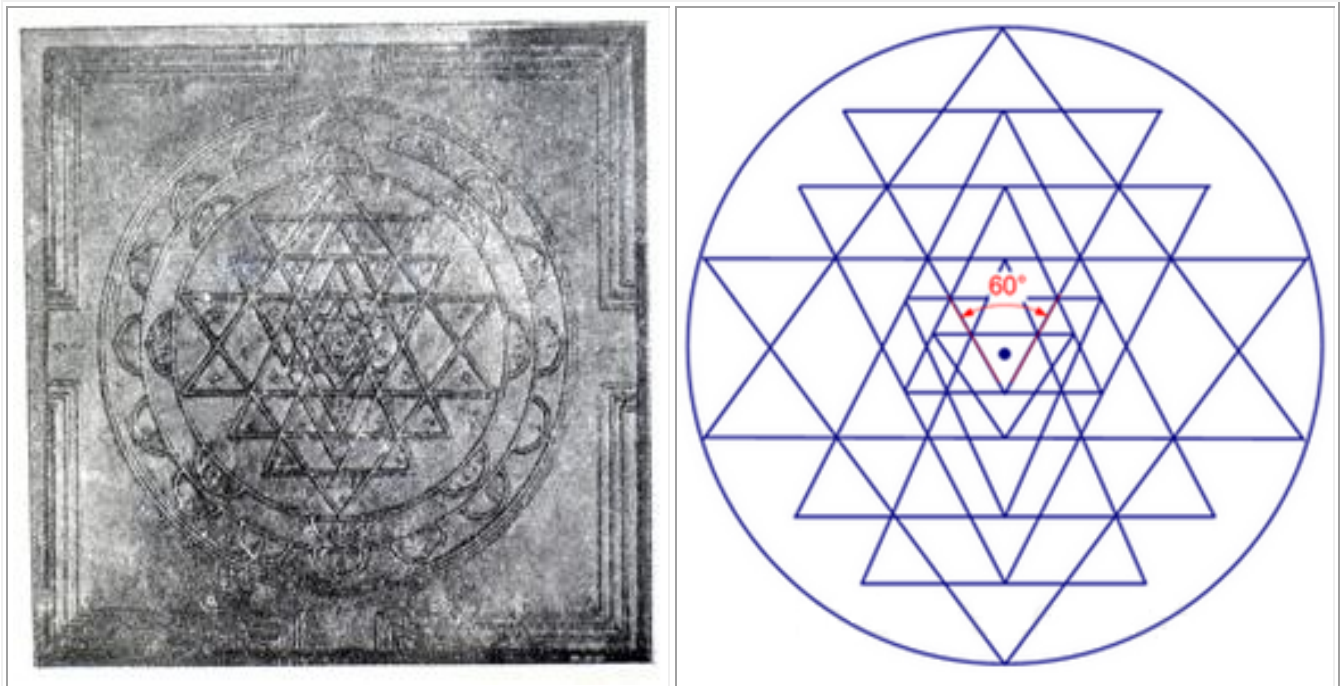


Figure 11 Sri Yantra from Sringeri temple.

The Sringeri temple in India claims to have the oldest Sri Yantra. This temple is one of the four pillars founded by none other than Shankara during the first millennium. Assuming that older Sri Yantras are closer to the original configuration lets see how this Sri Yantra compares to our optimal version. Obviously it is not possible to be certain that it is the oldest Sri Yantra on Earth but it is certainly older than most of the versions available. The shape of the petals and the bhupura are good indicators that it is a old Sri Yantra configuration.

Figure 11 shows an alleged picture of this Sri Yantra and a diagram that was drawn from the picture. Taking into account the distortions caused by the camera and printing we can see that the figure has many of the same characteristics as our optimal figure. The bindu is well centered and more importantly the centermost triangle has an angle very close to 60 degrees.

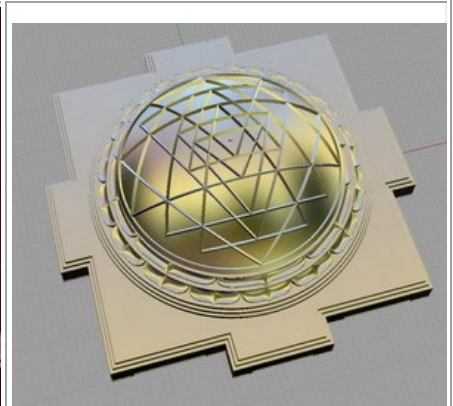
The Three Flavors of the Sri Yantra



Plane form



Pyramidal form (Meru)



Spherical form (Kurma)

Since the Sri Yantra is based on triangles it is very appropriate that there are currently three main ways to represent this figure. The first and probably the most common is the **plane form**, which is what we have been looking at so far. More pictures of the plane form can be seen [here](#).

The second is the **pyramidal form** called Meru in India. Mount Meru is a mythical mountain. So named because of the mountain shape of the figure. More pictures of pyramidal Sri Yantras can be seen [here](#).

The third and rarest form is the **spherical form** or Kurma. Kurma was the second incarnation of Vishnu, the turtle incarnation. This refers to the similarity between this form and the shell of a turtle. It is interesting to note that there seems to be some confusion with the use of these two terms. The pyramidal form is often wrongly referred to as Kurma. This form is the rarest because of the extremely high level of difficulty involved in generating it. We have not yet found a correct physical representation of a spherical Sri Yantra. There are many attempts but very few have succeeded. Pictures of spherical Sri Yantras can be seen [here](#).

The Optimal Sri Yantra

As we have mentioned earlier, drawing a Sri Yantra with minimal errors at the intersections is in itself a good challenge. If on top of that we add the two additional criterion that we have proposed (concentricity, and equilateral inner triangle) then

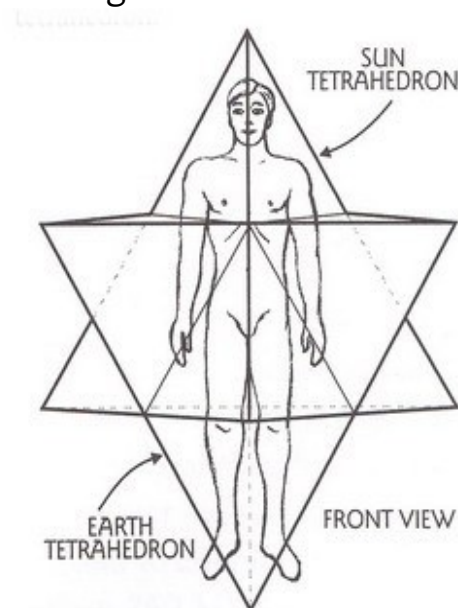
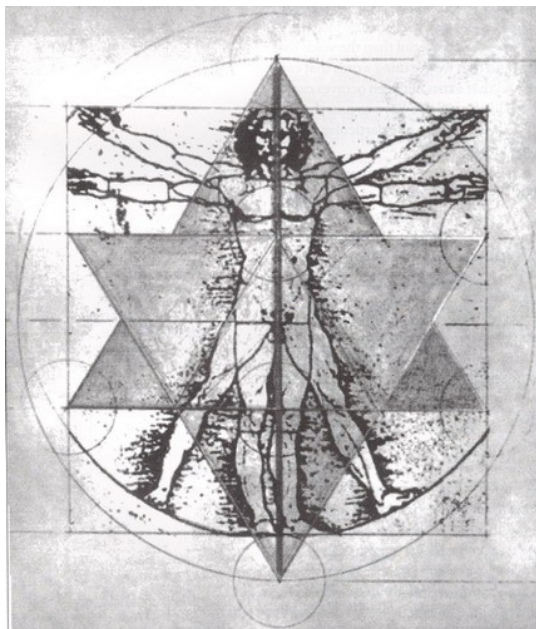
it would probably take a lifetime of trials and errors to achieve such a figure. But thanks to computers and mathematics this can be achieved in the blink of an eye. To achieve this result however, the figure needs to be converted into a simultaneous equation and then solved for the required constraints. For more on this topic take a look at the excellent paper from C.S. Rao. Once this is done we can then shape the figure according to the different criterion described above to obtain an optimal figure where the errors at the intersections are minimal, the figure is perfectly centered and the innermost triangle is equilateral.

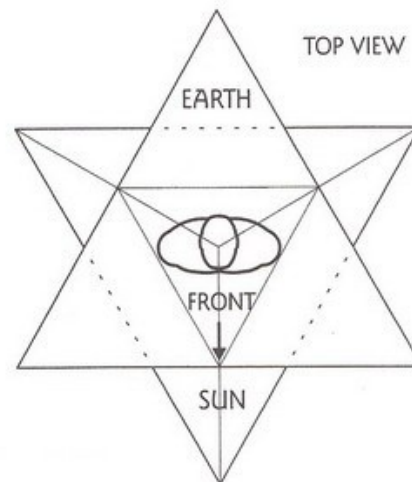
Sri Yantra and the Human Physiology

Since the Sri Yantra is such an important sacred geometry one wonders if it relates in any way to the human physiology. After doing some research on the web we have found two different sources that mention a field around the body that is similar to the Sri Yantra.

Merkaba

Drunvalo Melchizedek in his work on the flower of life geometry has mentioned that there is a field of energy around the body in the shape of a star tetrahedron. It is called a Merkaba which translates as vehicle of light.

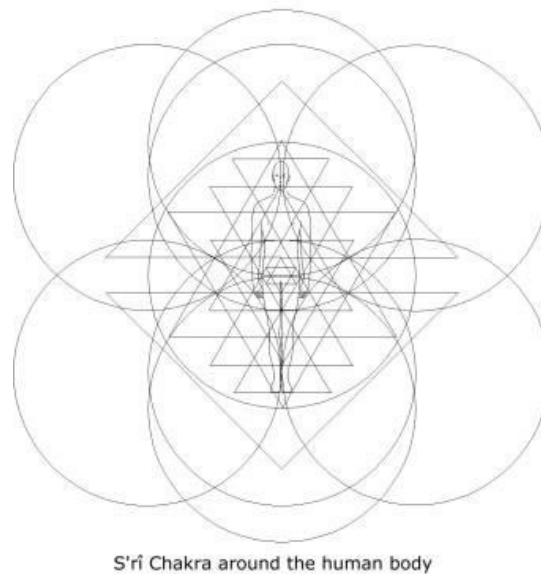




Merkaba field drawn on DaVinci vitruvian man

runvalo's teachings on the Flower of Life are excellent. He has unfolded a whole system of knowledge that is worth looking into. A must if you are interested in sacred geometry. He also teaches a breathing technique that allows one to enliven these fields by rotating them. Drunvalo goes on to say that these fields exists around every living thing.

Srî Chakra - Universal Jîva Archetype



The Sri Chakra which is another common name for the Sri Yantra is mentioned.

The most fundamental archetype of our universe is the *S'rî Chakra*. *S'rî* means *supreme* and *Chakra* means *circular structure*. The *S'rî Chakra* exists as a three-dimensional construct within which all evolving beings exist. It serves as a superstructure upon which the 432,000 *devas* responsible for the functioning of the body perch, like birds on a tree. One of the most important functions of the *S'rî Chakra* is to act as a communications device – much like an *antennae* – that connects the individual mind with the Mind of the Creator, Lord *Brahma*.

The *jîva* is the fundamental, eternal life unit of every evolving being and hence a very important object of study for anyone who is interested in improving the quality and quantity of his or her life. If the *jîva* is eternal and the core of our individual life, why do we not have a much greater awareness of the *jîva*? Why do we only live for a few years? What happens to us after we die? Are we reborn in another body? Why is life so difficult to bear at times, even unbearable, and at other times so joyful? Knowledge of the *jîva* will provide the answers to these questions and many more.

Even though a *jîva* is made of nothing but consciousness, it has a very specific structure based on the *S'rî Chakra*, the universal *jîva* archetype. The *S'rî Chakra* is a geometrical knowledge construct. A geometrical knowledge construct is a precisely configured collection of fundamental geometrical patterns that completely define a specific realm of knowledge.

Most of us are not used to thinking in terms of knowledge contained in a geometric pattern. We might normally think about knowledge as a thought or collection of words. However, primordial knowledge that forms the basis of everything is in the form of precise, three-dimensional geometric patterns. These three-dimensional patterns arise in the medium of consciousness, like ripples on the surface of a still lake.

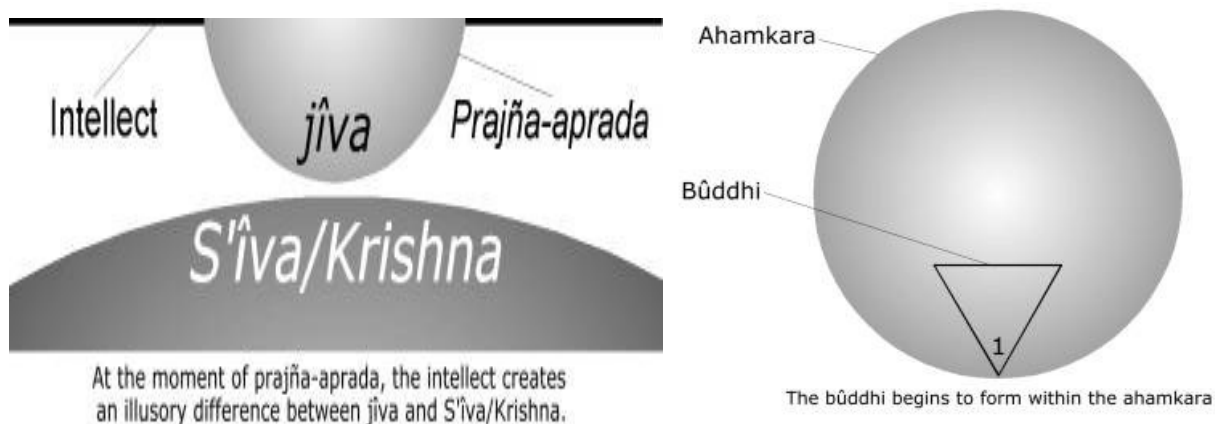
Like ripples in water, the primordial geometric knowledge constructs fade away if not refreshed. To refresh a primordial geometric knowledge construct, one must only bring it to mind and think about it. Whatever we put our attention on will be reinforced and grow stronger because attention infuses *s'aktî* into the object of attention. This is due to the spontaneous natural functioning of consciousness.

The three primordial geometric patterns are the sphere, tetrahedron, and pyramid. Each of these forms is associated with a property of individual consciousness like this:

Sphere	Ahamkara	Ego
Tetrahedron	Bûddhi	Intellect
Pyramid	Manas	Mind

The precise combination of these forms creates the primordial *S'rî Chakra* knowledge construct, which is the structure of the *jîva*. The *S'rî Chakra* is formed in a specific manner when the *jîva* initially breaks away to begin its sojourn into the realm of evolution. In this chapter we will explore how the *S'rî Chakra* initially forms to become the vehicle of the *jîva*.

The *S'rî Chakra* is a complex three-dimensional structure. However, it is very useful, for simplicity, to first study it in a two-dimensional representation. The following drawings illustrate the formation of the *S'rî Chakra* in a two-dimensional representation as it begins to form immediately after the moment of the initial *prajña-aprada* when the intellect of the *jîva* first creates an illusory difference between *jîva* and *S'îva/Krishna*.

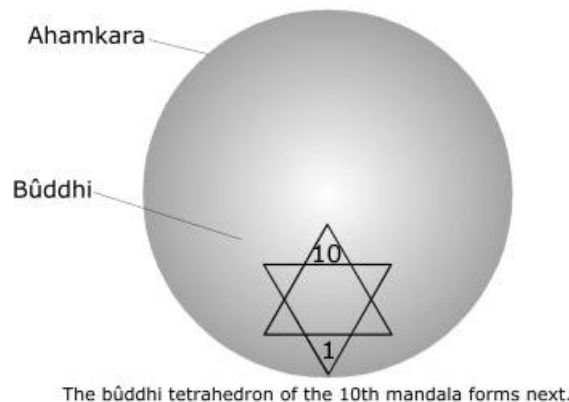


The distinction that forms between *jîva* and *S'îva/Krishna* is the first sprouting of the ego. The ego or *ahamkara* is a spherical primordial geometric structure that is the first part of the *S'rî Chakra* to arise. Within the *ahamkara* the *bûddhi* (intellect) begins to form with the appearance of the first tetrahedron, as illustrated in the drawings above.

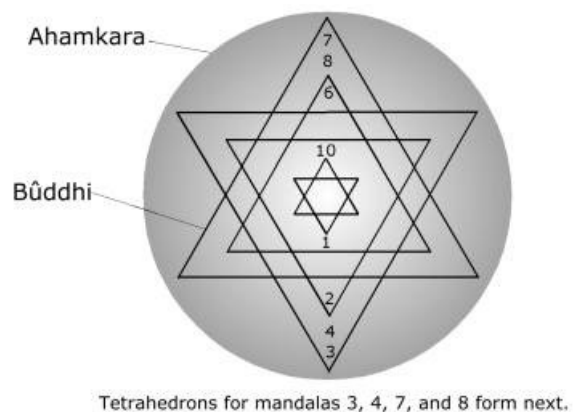
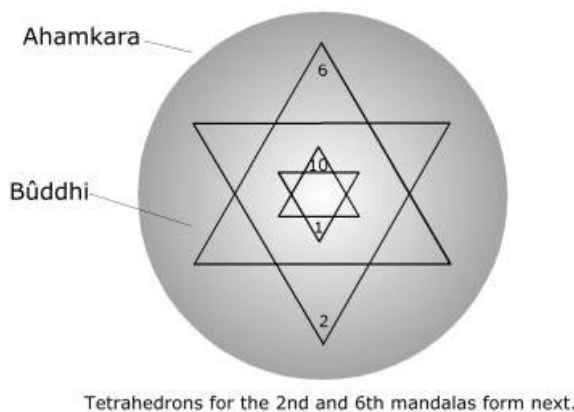
The first tetrahedron (shown as a triangle in the drawing above) of the *bûddhi* resonates with the primordial sound structure of the 1st *mandala* of the *Rik Veda*. The *Rik Veda* is the totality of all knowledge in the form of primordial

sound in which the seed value of the total potential of Natural Law is found. Each of the 10 *mandalas* resonates with a particular value of Natural Law.

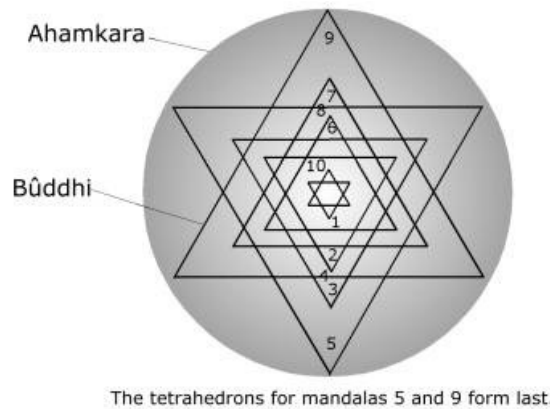
Sound, which is vibration, is the mechanism by which consciousness manifests and appears to take on a concrete form. The primordial geometric structures of sphere, tetrahedron and pyramid arise from the flow of *s'aktî* that accompanies the intention of the *rishî*. This flow, while vibratory in nature, is subtler than sound and provides the structure for the reverberation of sound. The first tetrahedron of the *bûddhi* provides the structure for the reverberation of the 1st *mandala* of the *Rik Veda*. This *mandala* contains the essence of the entire *Rik Veda*, and the whole of the *Rik Veda* can be found to come out of this *mandala*.



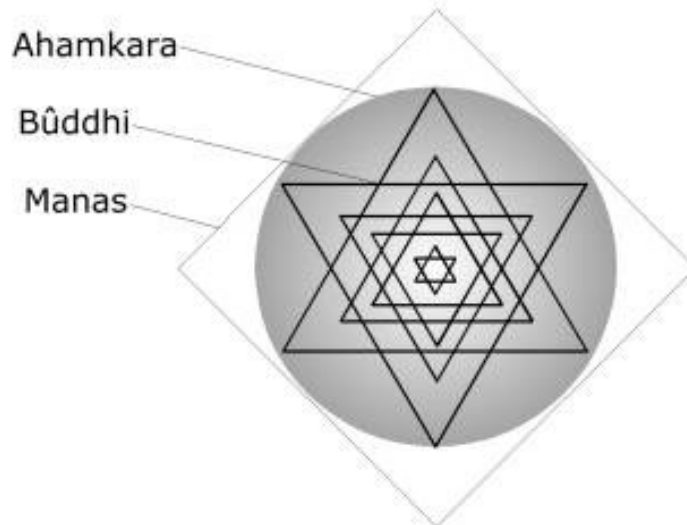
The next tetrahedron of the *bûddhi* aspect of the *S'rî Chakra* forms to resonate with the 10th *mandala* of the *Rik Veda*. The 10th *mandala* is the subtlest of the *mandalas* and generates the *purûsha* value. The *purûsha* is the *rishî* or silent witness, which resides in the *ahamkara* (ego). Following is a sequence of drawings that illustrate how the other eight *mandalas* form the remaining tetrahedral structure of the *bûddhi*.



For simplicity, *bûddhi* is shown not only in two-dimensions, but also static. However, the tetrahedrons are spinning about a central axis. More details about this and other features of the *S'rî Chakra* will be presented later.

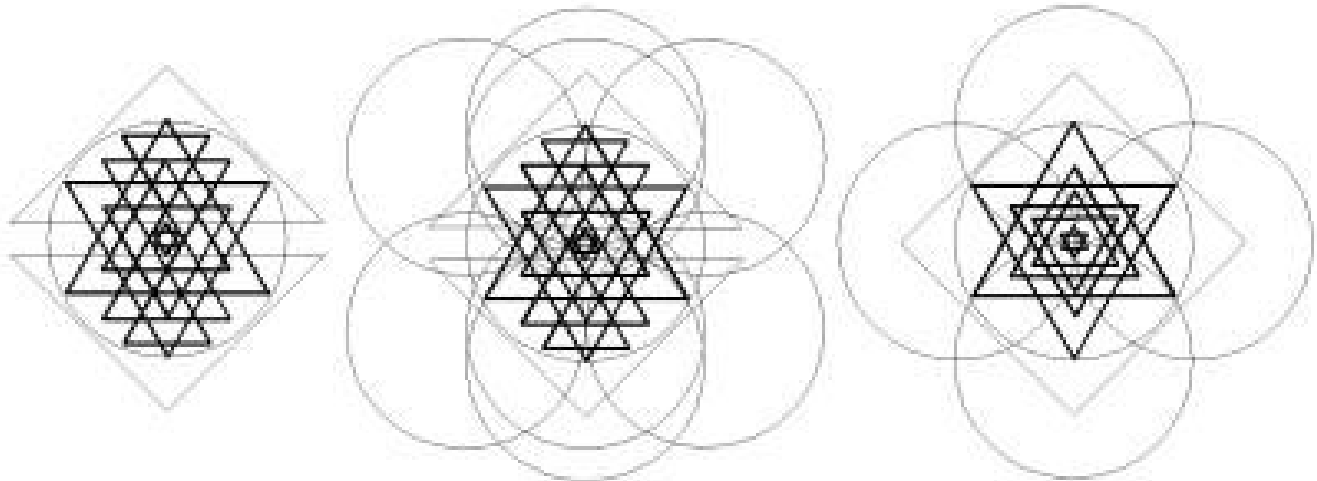


After *bûddhi* forms, encapsulated within the *ahamkara* sphere, *manas* (mind) forms as two pyramids arise which surround *bûddhi* and the *ahamkara*. The drawing below illustrates this step in the development of the *S'rî Chakra*. This is a two-dimensional top view showing the top pyramid only.



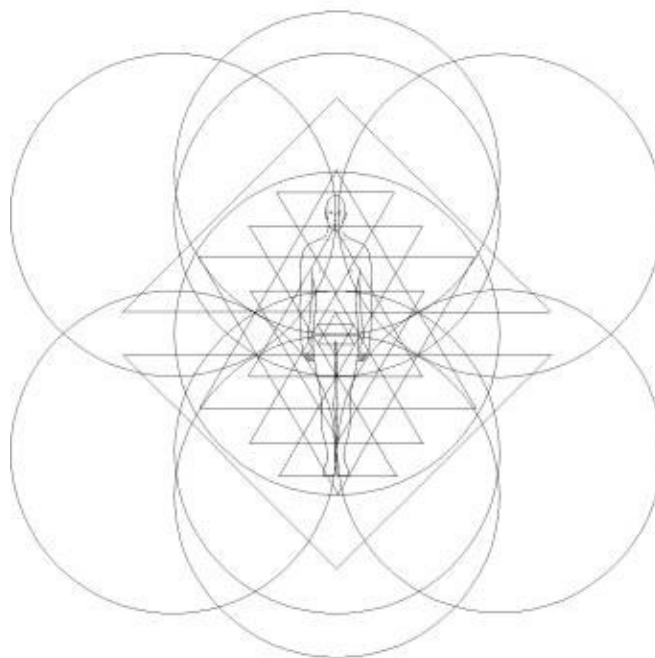
As the *jîva* begins its long cycle of evolution through the realm of *avidya* (darkness or without knowledge), the *ahamkara* replicates 10 times for a total of 11 *ahamkara* spheres. The finished *S'rî Chakra* has 10 interlocking tetrahedrons that form *bûddhi*, two pyramids that form *manas*, and 11 spheres that form *ahamkara*.

The drawings below depict the *S'ri Chakra* in three different two-dimensional views. The front view, as it would appear surrounding the human body, front view with the *ahamkara* spheres in place, and a top view with the *ahamkara* spheres. The *S'ri Chakra* that surrounds the human body is proportionately sized such that the *bûddhi* tetrahedron complex is approximately 10% higher than the top of the head.



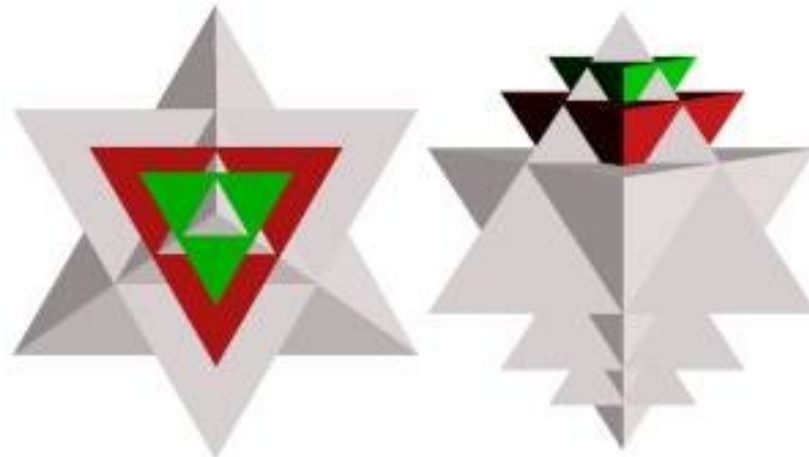
S'ri Chakra: front view, front with ahamkara spheres, top with spheres

S'ri Chakra and explore its minute detail. From these experiences we have constructed a series of three-dimensional drawings that will help you to visualize the full structure.



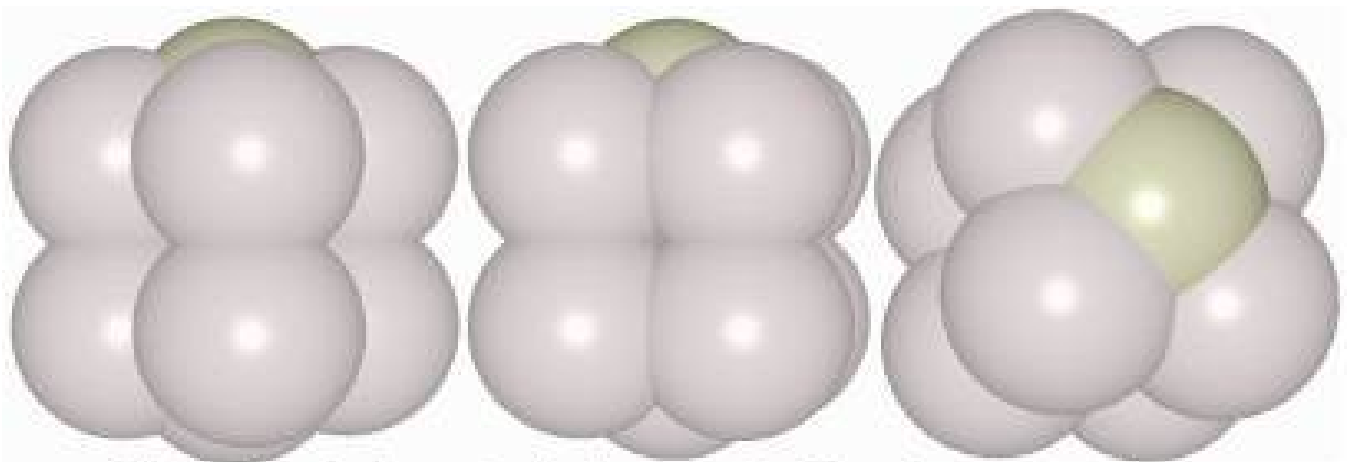
S'ri Chakra around the human body

Bûddhi tetrahedron structure. In these drawings two of the tetrahedrons have been colored to show detail better. Also we show both the top and front views. In the previous series of two-dimensional drawings, both the top and front views are shown.



Bûddhi tetrahedron structure, top and front views

Âtmavedî, Part II the relationship between the *S'rî Chakra* and the human body is fully illustrated. *S'rî Chakra* knowledge structure as it appears surrounding the human physical body with the *ahamkara* spheres showing. The *manas* pyramid and *bûddhi* tetrahedron structure is “inside” the set of *ahamkara* spheres and not visible.



S'rî Chakra: 3-dimensional views rotating from front to top view

The *S'rî Chakra* that is initially provided to the *jîva* is an unmanifest knowledge structure that is potentially capable of resonating Bliss Consciousness, however it is not populated by *devas* so it is non-functional. *Devas* are packets of *s'aktî* that have a

specific realm of functionality related to a specific knowledge structure. They arise spontaneously from consciousness in response to the intention of the *rishî*. If the intention of the *rishî* is in resonance with the *S'rî Chakra*, the *deva* will take up “residence” at the appropriate location within the structure of the *S'rî Chakra*, like a bird resting on a tree branch. If the intention is not in resonance, the *deva* will be ungrounded and hence a detractor from the holistic functionality of the *S'rî Chakra*. Ungrounded energies eventually become *kârmās*.

The *S'rî Chakra* has innumerable “residence locations” for specific *devas*, each according to its functionality. For example, each syllable of the *Rik Veda* generates a resonance value for a specific *deva*. Both the *ahamkara* spheres and the *bûddhi* tetrahedrons are associated with the *mandalas* of the *Rik Veda*, so it is possible to map out exactly what *devas* should be present in the *S'rî Chakra*, and where these *devas* should be located in the structure. This knowledge is the basis of an important technique in the *S'rî Chakra Mahâ-Videhâ* Programme that leads to *Brahman* Consciousness. When the *S'rî Chakra* is fully populated with *devas*, and free of ungrounded energies, *kârmās*, and *vâsanās*, *Brahman* Consciousness may be granted.

The *S'rî Chakra* is a fascinating structure with extraordinary detail related to all the primordial elements of the universe. It is a universal knowledge archetype that resonates with Pure Consciousness and the Mind of *Brahma*, the creator of our universe. One of its functions is to provide a communications link to the mind of *Brahma*, for the purpose of allowing the *jîva* to know the content of this mind, and therefore have access to all knowledge that is knowable in the universe.

Throughout the vast body of ancient Vedic Literature, composed by *Vedavyasa* there is frequent reference to the *padma* or lotus which is the esoteric symbol for the *S'rî Chakra*. The Supreme *Jîva Avatar* for our universe, Lord *Brahma* and His *S'akti Saraswati*, and the Supreme *Krishna Avatar S'rî Vishnu*, and His *S'akti Lakshmi* are all depicted as either seated upon or standing upon a lotus to symbolize the importance and fundamental nature of this structure.

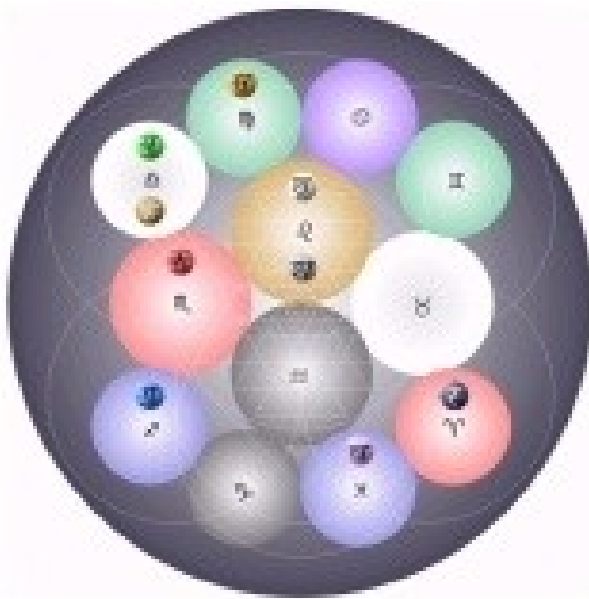
If everyone has this *S'rî Chakra* knowledge construct as standard equipment, why are we not aware of it and the mind of *Brahma*? The *S'rî Chakra* requires a full compliment of *devas* in order to function properly. These *devas* can be acquired by drinking water with dissolved *Âtmavedi* Crystals.

Programming Âtmavedi Crystals

When programmed with the 432,000 devas of the Rik Ved, we call these crystals Âtmavedi Crystals. The programming process takes over 1,300 hours during which the crystals are exposed to loud vibration of the entire Rik Ved plus other Vedic mantras in a prana amplified tetrahedral enclosure.

To utilize Âtmavedi Crystals to promote *Brahman* Consciousness, it is necessary to prepare 800ml of pure water each day by dissolving 1 capsule of crystals in the water. The water is programmed for the individual by using the provided 800ml glass container that has *S'ri Vyuhâ Jyotish Chakra* of the individual and a 10,000 gauss magnet attached to the bottom.



The *S'rî Vyuhâ Jyotish Chakra* is constructed to show your personal web of *karma* in a graphic form that is literally a symbolic representation of the eons of experience you have had.



Beginning with the dark blue sphere that contains all the symbols. This sphere is a symbol that represents the universe of Lord *Brahma*. It is from within this universe that you have been experiencing existence for innumerable life-times.

Within the sphere of the universe is the energy pattern of your *S'rî Chakra* - the fundamental archetype of pure knowledge for our universe. Your *S'rî Chakra* is the resonating energy frequency of the Mind of the Creator and your direct link to this Supreme Intelligence.

Embedded in your *S'rî Chakra* are all of the *karmas* and ungrounded energies that you have generated during your eons of existence. The symbols here are

- *Rashis* - larger colored spheres with symbols at their center. There are 12 *Rashis* and each one represents an aggregation of *karma*.
- *Bhavas* - the placement of the *Rashis* represent their *Bhava* position. The large *Rashi* in the upper center is the *Lagna* (ascendant) and is a primary indicator of the *karma* of this life. The second *Bhava* is located above and to the left, the third is to the left of the second and so on around the *Chakra*. 
- *Grahas* - small colored spheres with symbols at their center. There are nine *Grahas* who are responsible for delivering the *karma* associated with the *Rashis*. Each *Rashi* is presided over by a *Graha*. 

The *S'rî Vyuha Jyotish Chakra* is created based on your birth date, birth time and birth location. This *yantra* provides a connection to the individual thread of existence that has manifested your physical life. The *Chakra* captures the holistic value of your *karma*.

The Spherical (Kurma) Sri Yantra

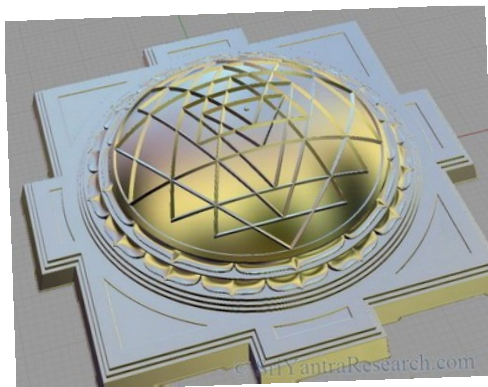


Figure 1. spherical Sri Yantra

This form (as opposed to the plane or pyramid form) is particularly interesting because of its higher degree of complexity and great beauty. The added complexity involved in creating a spherical Sri Yantra is probably why it is the rarest and why most of the ones we have seen so far are poorly constructed. In this article we will look more closely at this fascinating configuration of the Sri Yantra and how the lines of this version can be straight and curved at the same time.

So far we haven't been able to find a spherical Sri Yantra done properly except for the version that we have created with the help of a 3D drawing program and mathematical modelisation (figure 1). The reason is that the spherical version greatly increases the difficulty of achieving a correct figure. The added dimension increases the number of combinations exponentially. In other words it becomes a lot more difficult to draw the figure properly when doing so on a dome rather than on a flat surface. The pyramid form is really an extended version of the plane version so it is not more difficult to produce than the plane form.

You can see pictures of different version of the spherical Sri Yantra [here](#). When we look closely we find that all but the computer generated version at the top are faulty. Lets take the copper figure in the image below as an example:

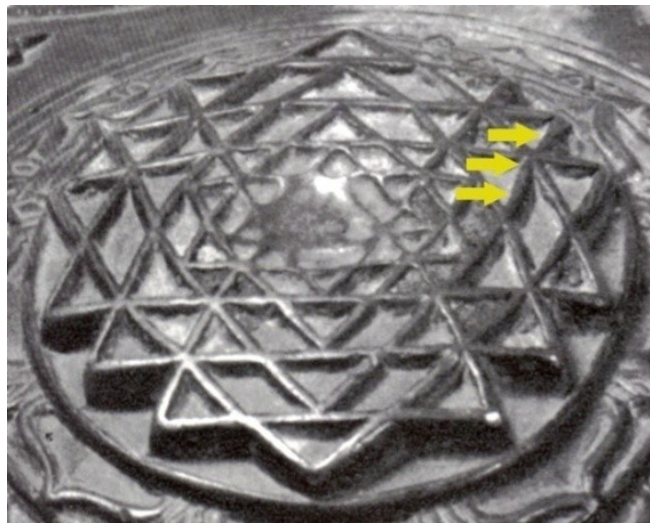


Figure 2. Serious fudging can be seen on many of the lines.

The picture above shows a copper Sri Yantra. At first look the figure appears correct but when we take a closer look we see that the artists wasn't able to make the lines match so a certain amount of cheating was necessary. The yellow arrows show how the artist had to bend this line to make it match at the triple intersection. If you look carefully you will notice that other lines had to be bent in the same way.

Another important aspect of a spherical Sri Yantra is the specific curvature of the lines used in the figure. The curvatures of the lines comes from the fact that we are drawing triangles on a spherical surface. But the lines (when drawn properly) are actually straight lines drawn on the surface of a sphere. Like the path of an airplane flying from New York to Paris. If you look at the trajectory directly from above, the line will appear straight, but if we look at it from an angle it will look curved. The

illustration below shows this phenomena with a properly constructed spherical Sri Yantra. The green line appears straight in the middle image when we look at it from straight above or in other words when our point of view is perpendicular to the line.

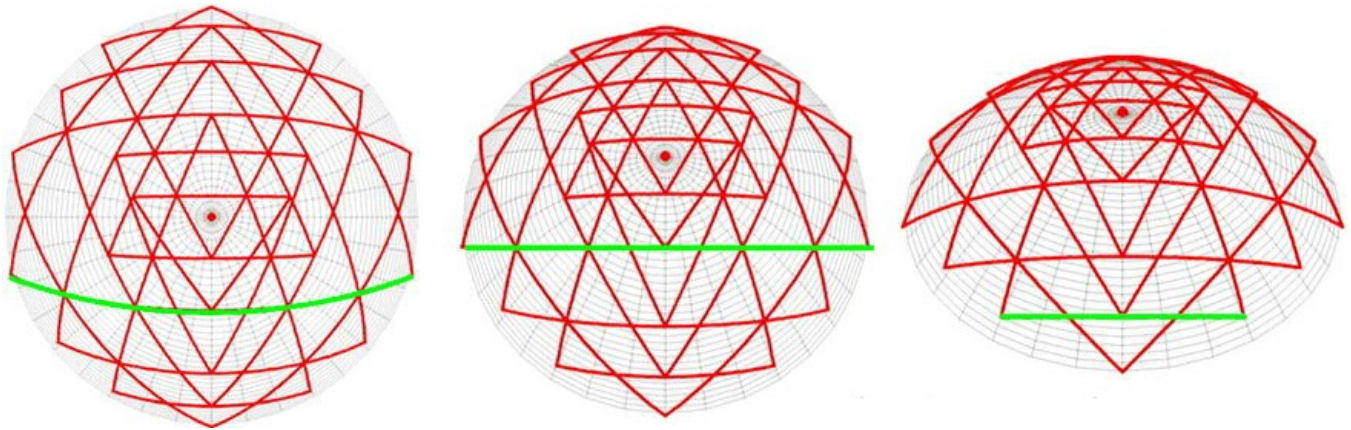


Figure 3. The spherical Sri Yantra is constructed with straight lines on a sphere (arcs of great circles).

Such a line is created on a sphere if it is a segment of a "great circle". A great circle is created on a sphere when a circle drawn on the surface has its center located at the center of the sphere. For example, longitude lines around the planet are all great circles, latitude lines on the other hand are not except at the equator. This characteristic is very interesting. It means that if a spherical Sri Yantra is constructed with arcs of great circles (as it should) we really have straight lines on a sphere. So in a way we are preserving the qualities of the plane Sri Yantra and adding curvature in another axis, both coexisting at the same time. The spherical version therefore adds a new dimension but doesn't lose the basic qualities of the plane figure.

When we look at the overall figure from above (figure 3, left figure) the lines appear more and more curved as we move away from the center. This is because our position is perpendicular to the center point only and because we are relatively close to the surface. If we move around we would see that every line is actually straight when we look at it from directly above. Also if we were to back off far enough the Sri Yantra would look identical to a plane Sri Yantra. Also if we choose to take a very small part of a sphere to draw the spherical form we will end up with a plane version. Because a very small area of a sphere is for all practical purpose flat. The very reason why the Earth was believed to be flat by many people for a long time. This shows that the plane version is not different from the spherical version but is a special case of the spherical form.

A spherical Sri Yantra can be projected in 2D to obtain a plane figure with curved lines.

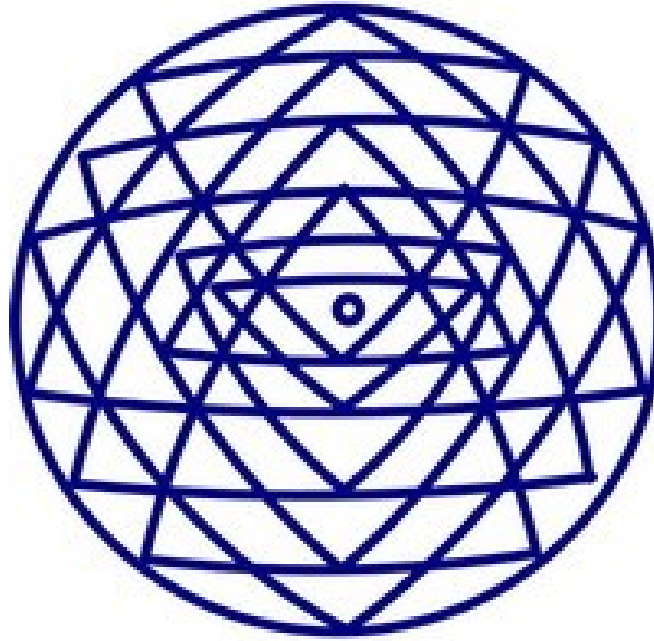


figure 4. Spherical Sri Yantra projection in 2D.

A proper spherical Sri Yantra must therefore be done with arcs of great circles and must obviously be at least concurrent (matching triple intersections). The computer generated drawing shown in figure 1 achieves those two criteria's as well as concentricity and equilateral central triangle as illustrated in the figure below.

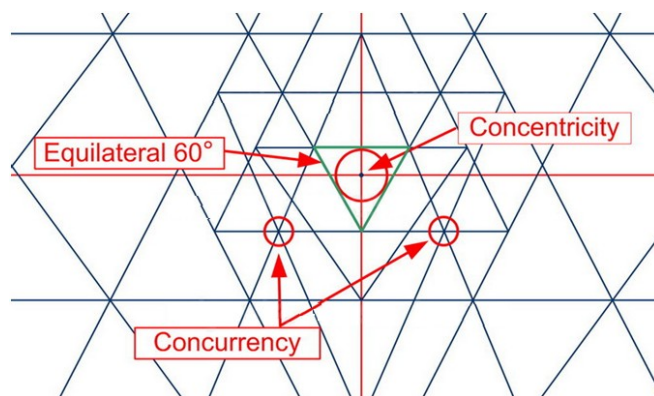
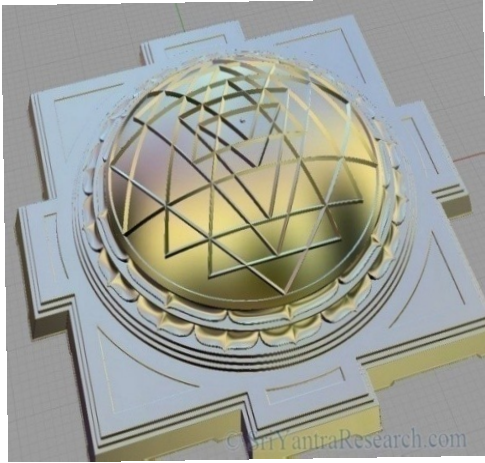
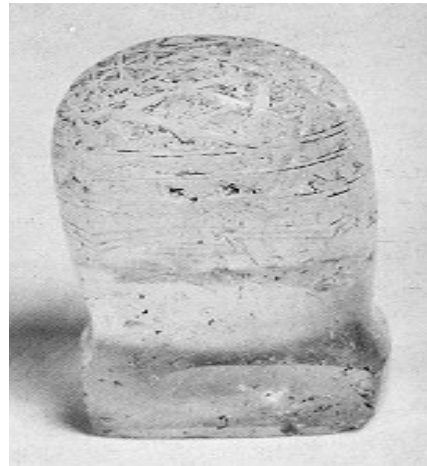


Figure 5. The three criteria's of an optimal Sri Yantra.

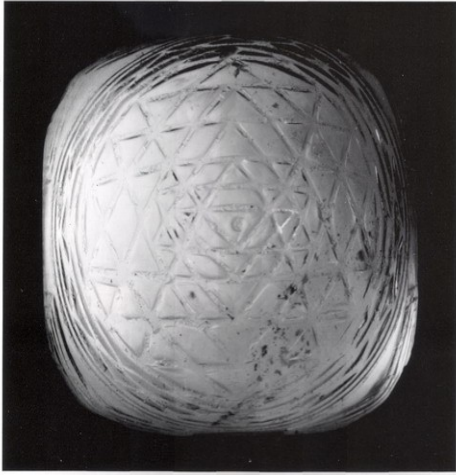
Going back to figure 2 we can see that the curvature of the lines are not proportional to the curvature of the dome. In other words the curvature of the lines doesn't match the curvature of the overall sculpture making it more of a projection in two dimensions rather than a true spherical Sri Yantra.



spherical Sri Yantra.



17th century. Rock crystal



Nepal c. 1700



Sri Yantra. Copper plate. South India.
17th-18th century A.D.



South India, c. 17th century. Copper.



Spherical Sri Yantra carved in Aventurine.



Sri Yantra carved on top of Lingam in Anegundi temple in Karnataka.



Sri Yantra carved on top of Lingam in Anegundi temple in Karnataka.

The One and the Many: Will the Real Sri Yantra Please Rise?

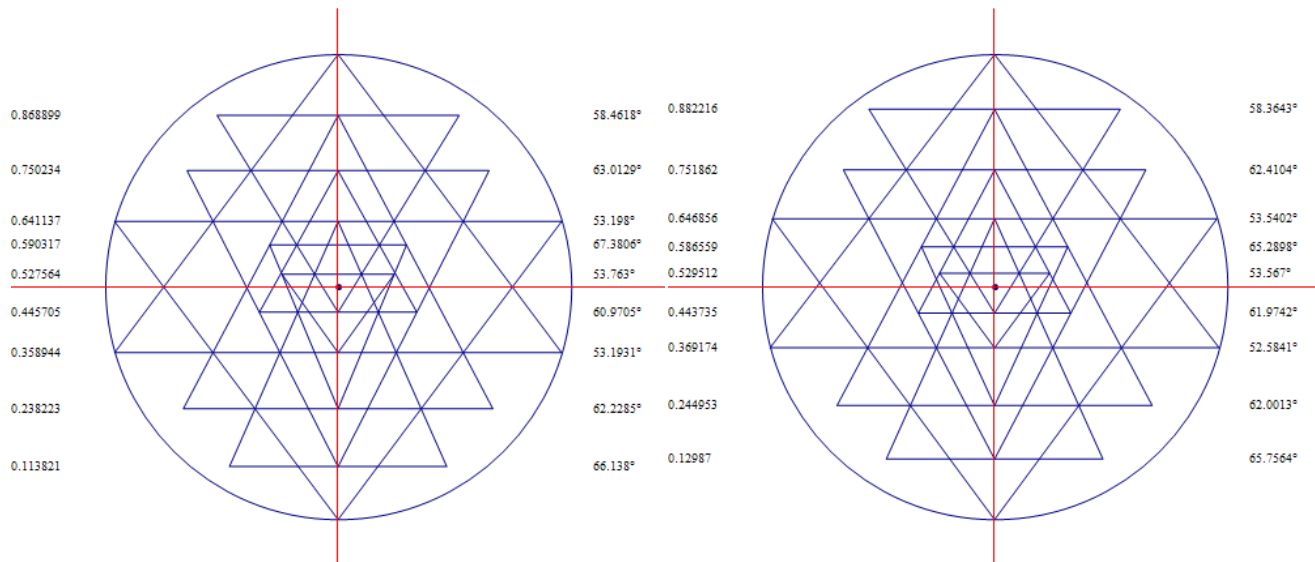


Figure 1. Two slightly different Sri Yantras.

Look carefully at the two images above. At first sight they seem identical. After looking carefully you will notice that they are slightly different. The angles written on the right side of the image shows that the two figures are indeed different.

If you have ever tried to draw a Sri Yantra you know how difficult it is to achieve a figure where all the lines match precisely at the triple intersections. That's what makes the Sri Yantra so interesting, all the triangles are interlocked and you can't change one triangle without changing many of the others.

The Sri Yantra figure has been around for quite a while. We don't really know how long but many hundreds of year if not thousands. When drawn by hand it's a process of trial and error. After a while if you are lucky you end up with a figure where all the lines match up fairly precisely. Most people assume at this stage that they have achieve the goal of producing a correct Sri Yantra.

It turns out that it's not that simple. The criteria of achieving lines that match precisely at the triple intersections (concurrency) is essential but in itself it is not enough to fully define the figure. What this mean is that you can draw an infinite number of Sri Yantras that will be concurrent.

This video shows a sequence of different Sri Yantras that are all perfectly concurrent. As this shows clearly, concurrency is not enough to fully define the geometry of the Sri Yantra. The criteria of concurrency (no extraneous triangles at the triple intersections) allows an infinite amount of variation.

Since none of traditional methods are precise enough we are left guessing. Which one of the many hundreds of variations in use is the original figure if any? We are obviously assuming that there is an optimal and original configuration that was lost and distorted with time.

Obviously other criterias are needed to better define the configuration. So far in our research we have found three criterias that we consider essential.

How to Evaluate a Sri Yantra

The first and probably most obvious criterion is **concurrency** or the degree of precision at the triple intersections. The second is **concentricity** which requires the center of the innermost triangle (bindu location) to be also at the center of the outer circle. The third is **equilaterality**, where the innermost triangle should be perfectly symmetrical (equilateral triangle).

1. Concurrency (Precision)

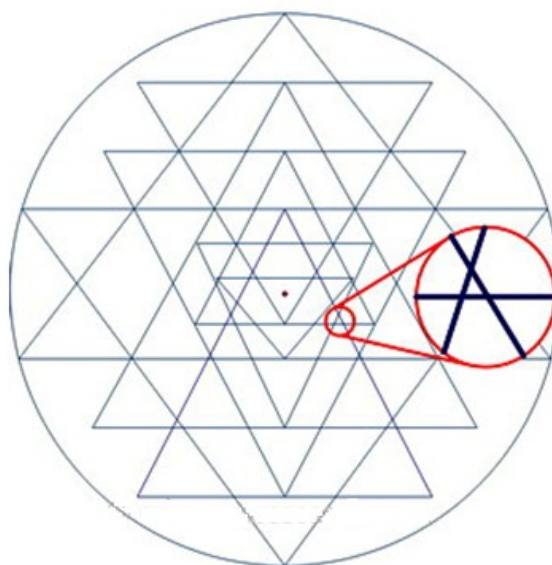


Figure 1. Error at a triple intersection

This criteria is the most obvious. The triple intersections must intersect precisely at one point as oppose to forming secondary triangles. First one should look at how many errors are present in the figure. If the figure contains more than two errors then this indicates that the figure was not drawn properly. When following the logical order shown here a maximum of two errors will be found.

The other question is how big the errors are. ideally the errors are so small that they are hidden by the thickness of the lines used.

A mathematical value can be given for the total errors by adding all the area of the errors and relating this number to the area of the circle as a percentage.

$(nb \text{ errors} \times \text{error surface} / \text{circle area}) \times 100$

2. Concentricity (Centeredness)

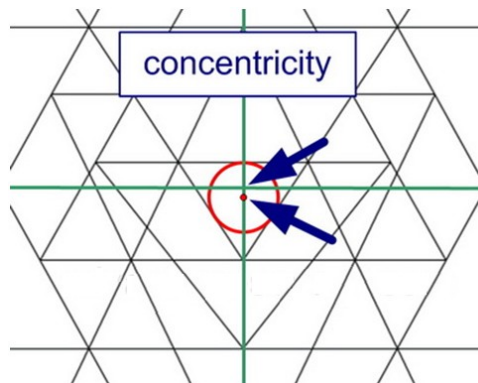


Figure 2. Example of a non-concentric Sri Yantra.

First you need to find the center of the outer triangle. This can be done easily in a drawing program or with a compass. In the drawing above the center of the outer circle is shown with the green lines. Now we need to find the proper location of the bindu. In many figures the bindu is not located properly, i.e. at the center of the innermost triangle. The simplest way to find the correct location of the bindu is to draw a circle that fits perfectly inside the innermost triangle. This is called the incenter of a triangle.

Ideally the bindu should be at the center of the innermost triangle AND at centered of the outer circle. The figure above shows an example of a figure where the center of the innermost triangle (bindu) does not coincide with the center of the outer circle (green lines).

This can be expressed mathematically by calculating:

$$(\text{distance between bindu and circle center} / \text{circle diameter}) * 100$$

3. Equilaterality (Symmetry)

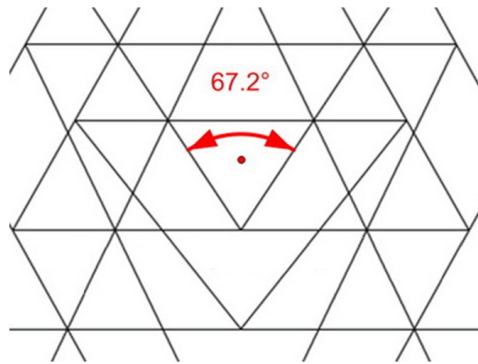
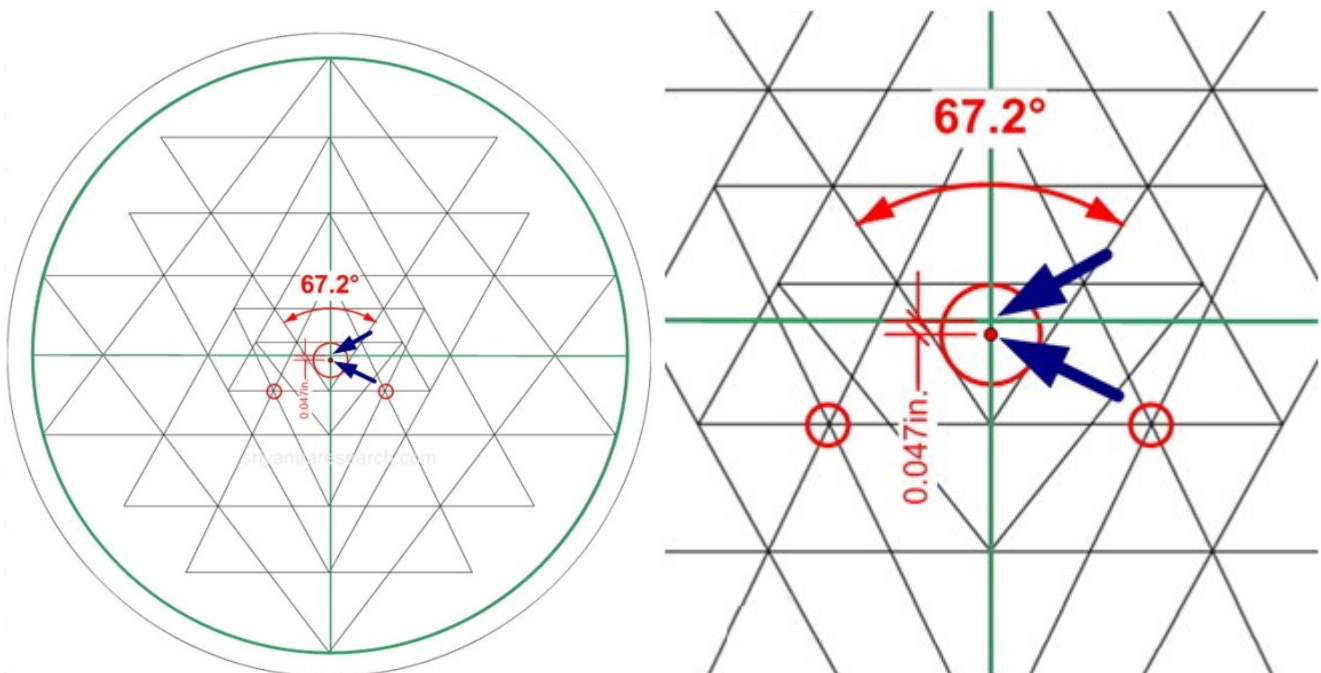


Figure 3. Equilaterality

Measure the angle of the innermost triangle.

In the figure above we see a figure where the innermost triangle is not equilateral since the angle is different from 60 degrees. An equilateral triangle is symmetrical because all sides are the same length and all angles are equal to 60 degrees.



We can see that the figure above used as an example doesn't satisfy all three criteria. The first criterion of concurrency is satisfied since all the intersection match precisely. However the center of the innermost triangle (bindu location) is not at the center of the outer circle (green cross). Also we see that the angle of the innermost triangle is 67.2 degrees, or 7.2 degree away from the ideal of 60 degrees.

The Golden Ratio Triangles

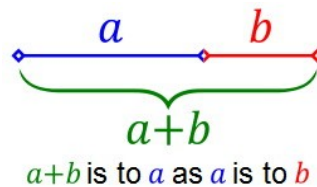


Figure 1 The golden ratio definition

Since the Sri Yantra is made of triangles it is worth while spending some time learning a little more about triangles, more specifically triangles in the context of the famous golden ratio.

We have to start with the golden ratio which is also known as the **phi ratio** or the **golden proportion**. It is the only ratio that satisfies the definition **a+b is to a as a is to b** show in figure 1. In simpler terms this means that $a+b / a = a / b$. If we fold b over a it will divide it in the golden ratio. If we take the smaller part and fold it again it will divide the line in the same proportion over and over again. It's a perfect self-embedding proportion which explains why most of our limbs are divided in the proportion of the golden ratio.

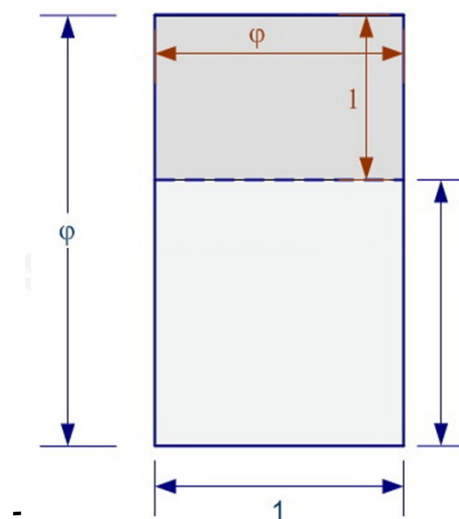


figure 2. The golden rectangle

If this seems too abstract let's look at it in 2 dimensions. Figure 2 shows a simple golden rectangle with sides $1 \times \phi$. If we divide this rectangle again by drawing a line of length equal to the shorter side (length 1) we end up with a smaller golden ratio rectangle (dark gray). We can repeat this operation with the smaller rectangle and end up once again with a smaller golden rectangle and a square. This shows the **fractal (self similarity)** and **self embeddedness** properties of the golden ratio.

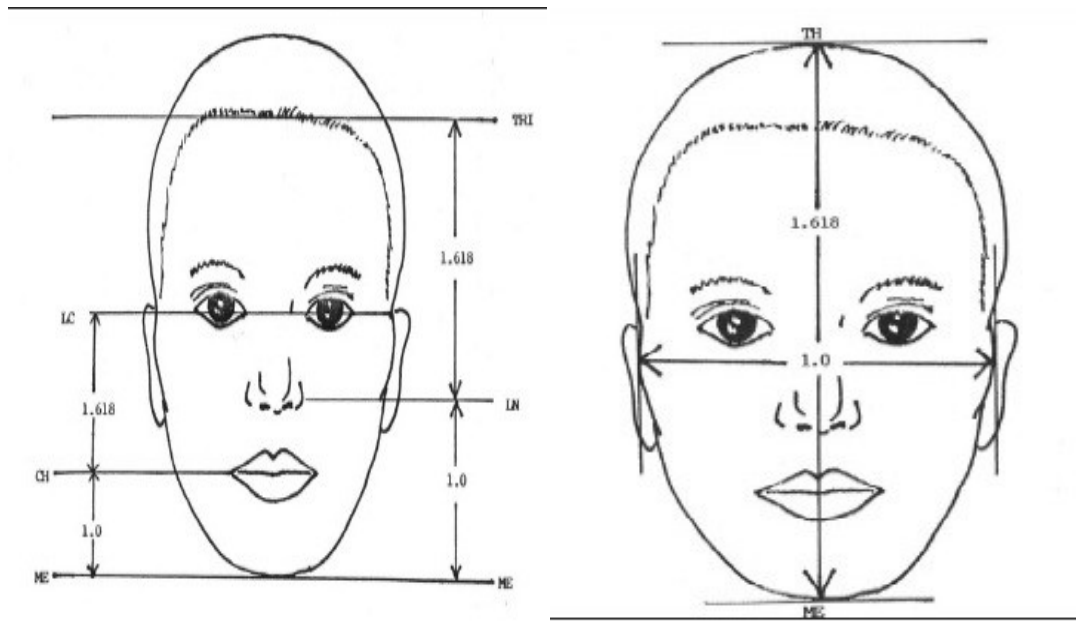


Figure 3 Golden ratio beauty mask

Our perception of beauty is actually defined by the the golden ratio. An attractive person is attractive because their proportions are closer to the golden ratio. In nature the Fibonacci numbers are a close approximation of the golden ratio since fractions are not always possible in the real world.

The Golden proportion is **1.6180..** also noted by the greek letter phi (ϕ). The inverse of phi ($1/\phi$) is noted with capital phi (Φ) and is equal to 0.6180... That's one of the many surprising property of the golden ratio $\phi - 1 = 1/\phi$.

In the case of the **golden rectangle** things are simple. You draw a rectangle with side 1 and 1.6180....

But since the Sri Yantra is made of 9 interlocking triangles we are mainly interested in triangles. There is only one way to draw a golden ratio rectangle. A rectangle has only two degrees of freedom: width and height. But with a triangle there is width, height, and length of the slanted side. Three degrees of freedom. We will also see

that other variations are also possible when we use a right angle triangle versus an isosceles one.

This gives rise to many variations of "golden ratio" triangles. In this article will look at seven different ones and their characteristics.

The King and Queen

Lets start with the King and Queen of the golden ratio triangles. These two are the real thing. These two triangles are what is usually implied by "golden ratio triangle".

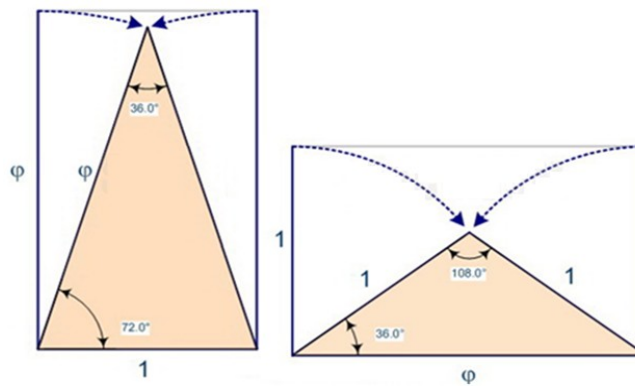


Figure 4 Creating the golden triangles from the golden rectangle

These two golden triangles can be created easily from the golden rectangle by removing one of the sides and collapsing the two open sides until they meet in the middle as shown in figure 4. Interestingly the angles of these two triangles are all multiples of 36.

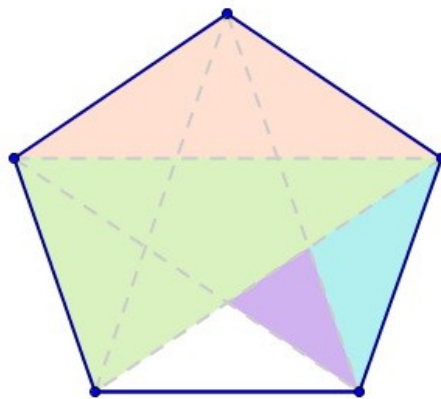


Figure 5 Golden triangles in the pentagon

Another way of generating golden triangles is to draw a pentagon. The pentagon more than any other figure is associated with the golden ratio. When joining the five apex of a pentagon we end up with a multitude of golden ratio triangles. The colored areas in figure 5 show the two golden triangles showing up in two different sizes in the pentagon.

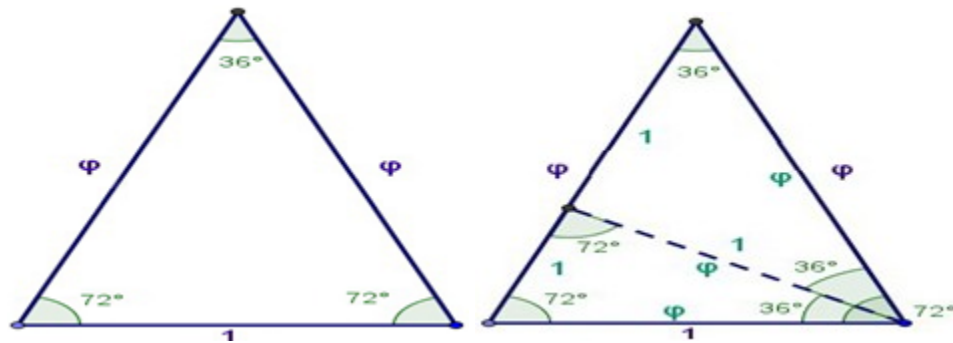


Figure 6 Golden triangle King

Lets look at those two triangles in more detail and see what makes them so special. In the image above we see that this triangle has two angles of 72 degrees and one angle of 36 degrees. The angles are all multiples of 36. If the base is of length 1 then the slanted sides will be of length 1.6180.. which is symbolized by the greek letter phi (ϕ). This is why it is also called the phi ratio.

If we run a line that divides one of the 72 degrees angle in two (bisecting of the angle) we see that another smaller golden ratio triangle appears. This shows the self similar property of the golden ratio at work. The same self replication effect is noticed with the golden rectangle.

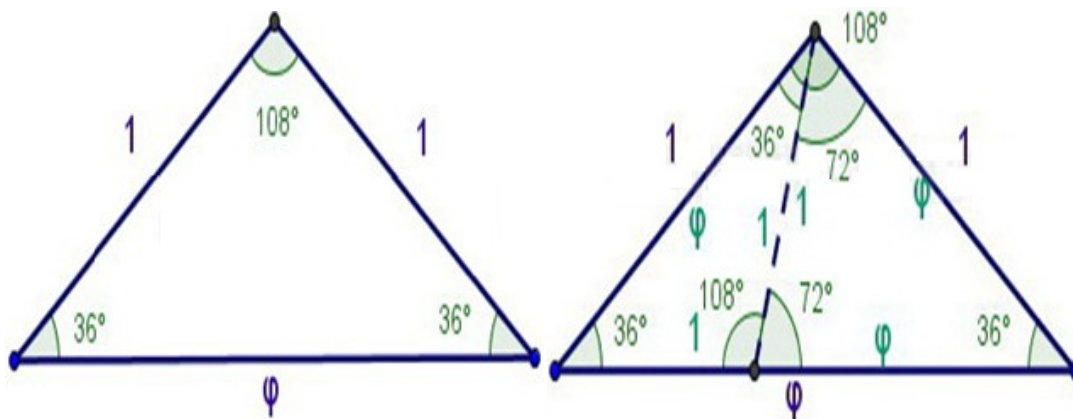


Figure 7 Golden triangle Queen

Another golden ratio triangle can obviously be created by making the two slanted sides length 1 and the base length 1.6180. This produces a flatter triangle with the

same angles 36 and 72 degrees. Here again we can subdivide this triangle (shown with the dotted line) this time by dividing the 72 degree angle by $1/3$. We end up with a smaller triangle with the same proportions on the left side. On the right side we have a triangle similar to the first one we created. We can keep subdividing like this forever which will create a golden ratio spiral. Another pattern widely used in nature.

The Golden Cousins

The two triangles we have studied in the previous section are the real golden ratio triangles. However it is possible to create a variation by making a triangle with a base of unit length and a height of 1.6180 (instead of the side length). It is very similar to the first triangle we looked at but it doesn't have the self replicating and fractal qualities which is typical of the real golden ratio triangles.

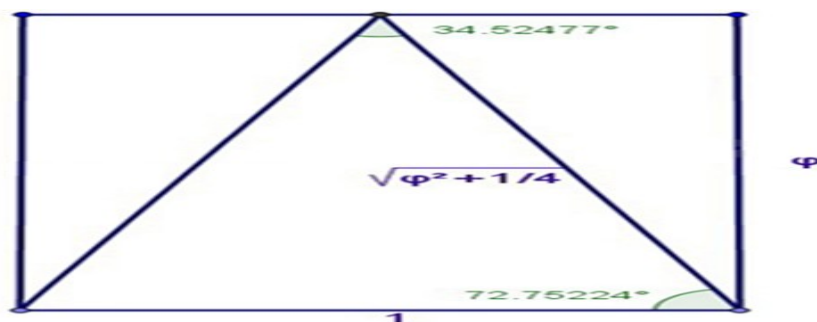


Figure 8

So far we have been using isosceles triangles. Symmetrical triangles along the vertical axis. We can also use right angle triangles which gives rise to two more golden ratio cousins.

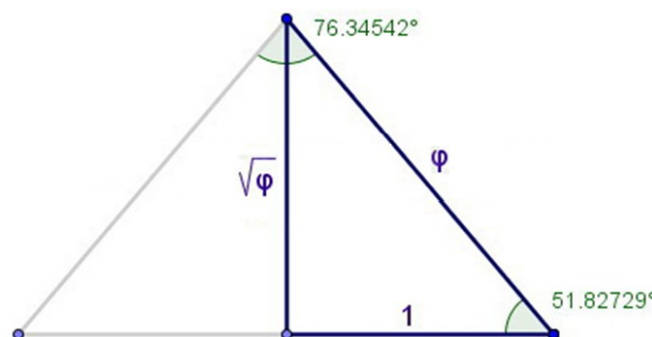


Figure 9 Golden triangle used for the pyramid of Giza

Now since we are using a right angle triangle we have three side of different lengths instead of two as in an isosceles triangle. This gives rise to more ways to introduce the golden ratio in a triangle.

The first can be seen in the image above. In this golden ratio triangle we use the base as unit length and the slanted side as phi length. This interestingly results in a height of square root of phi. One more sign of the magic of the golden ratio. If we create a mirror image of this triangle we end up with an isosceles triangle of base 2, a height of square root of phi and sides of length phi. This by the way is really close to the shape of the famous great pyramid of giza.

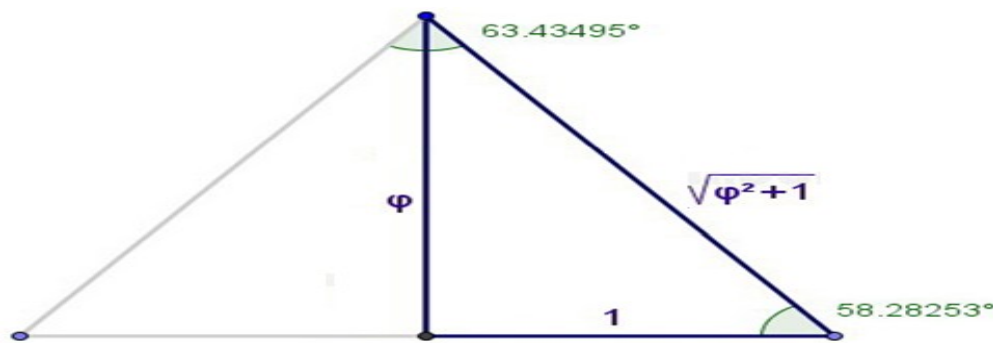


Figure 10

The second variation can be achieved by giving the triangle a height of phi and base of one. This results in a triangle which is slightly higher than the previous one since the angle is of 58.3 degrees instead of 51.8 degrees. It is now easy to see why the first one was selected as the shape of the pyramid in giza. It makes for a pyramid that is not too high or too low, stable and pleasant to look at.

The Distant Cousins

Two other sub variations are also possible. These would be consider the most inferior type since none of their sides measure exactly phi.

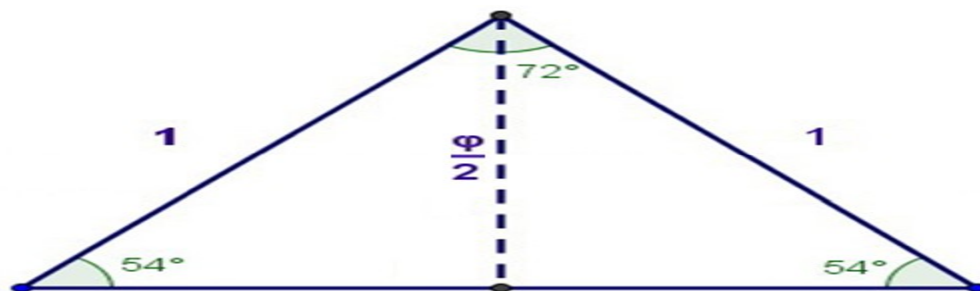


Figure 11 Golden triangle is a subset of the Queen triangle.

This variation uses a height of $\phi/2$ and a side of length 1. We see that this triangle is actually a subset of the second one we look at. You can see that we have the same angles of 36 and 108 degrees. It is half of that triangle. We see that in this triangle we have angles that are multiples of 18 as with the first two triangles.

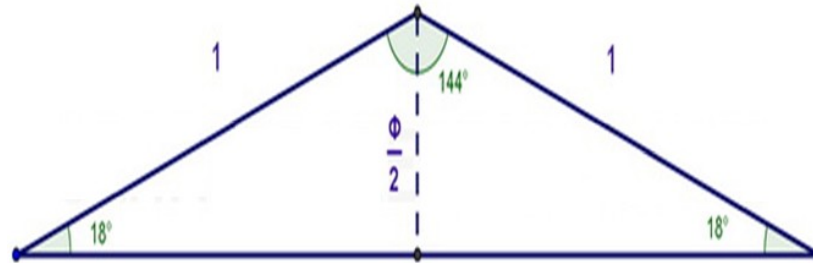


Figure 12

This last triangle completes the series of multiples of 18. We see that the phi ratio and it's conjugate (capital phi) shows up in all three lengths. We now have triangles with a smaller angle of 18, 36, 54, 72 degrees which are all multiples of 18.

The Family Reunion

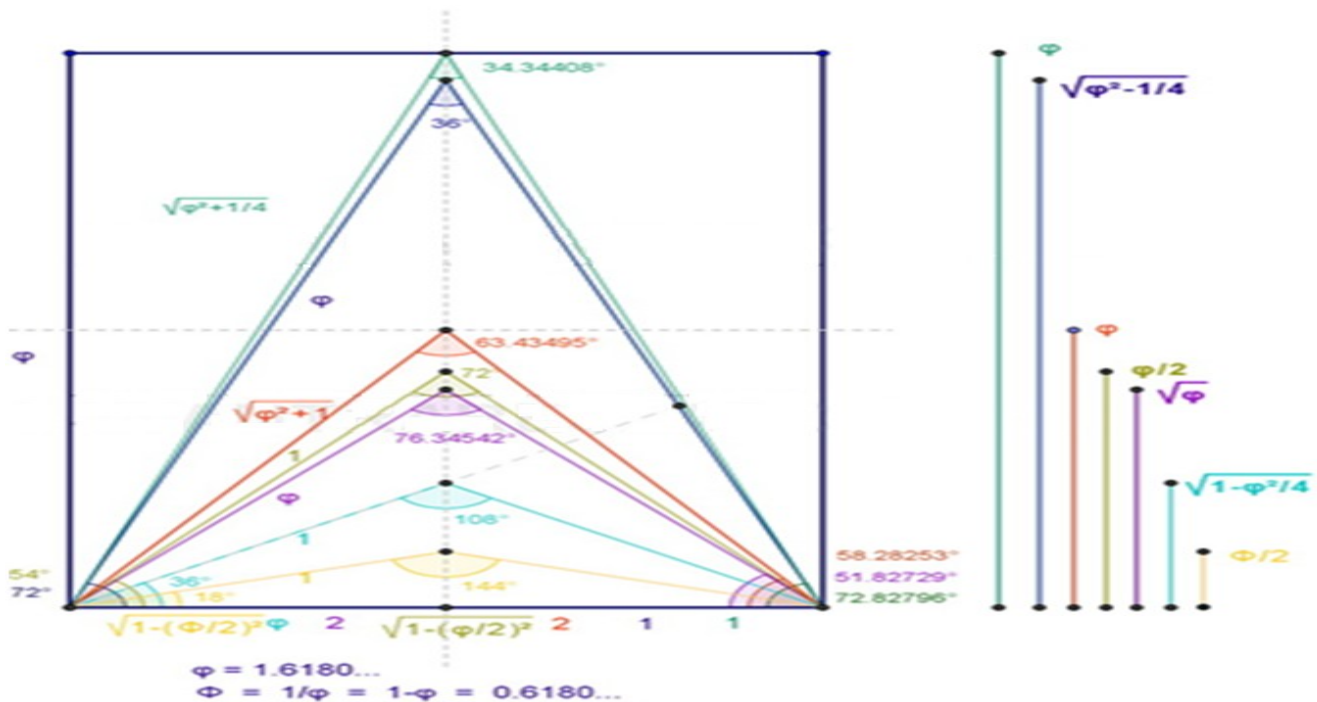


Figure 13 The golden triangles inside a golden rectangle.

This figure shows all the golden ratio triangles fitted inside a golden rectangle. We could divide the golden ratio in three families. First we have the triangles with even

angles that are a multiple of 18. This can be further divided in two groups. The King and Queen of the golden ratio triangles are the first two that we generated by collapsing the sides of the golden rectangle. The sides of these two triangles have length 1 or φ . A third group would include the triangles that have irrational angles: 51.82..., 58.28..., 72.82...

The Equilateral Triangle

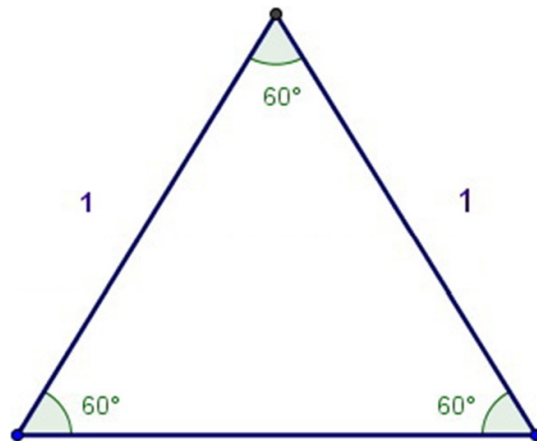


Figure 14 The Equilateral triangle

We should also mention the equilateral triangle as a major player in the triangle arena. It doesn't have any golden proportions but it is a basic component of nature because of its perfect symmetry and simplicity. We notice that it shows up in many of the platonic solids that are the building block of three dimensional geometry. All crystal shapes for example can be derived from the platonic solids.

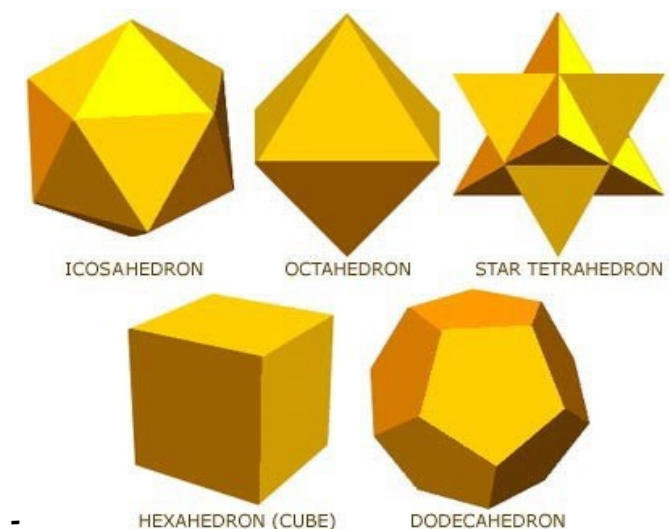


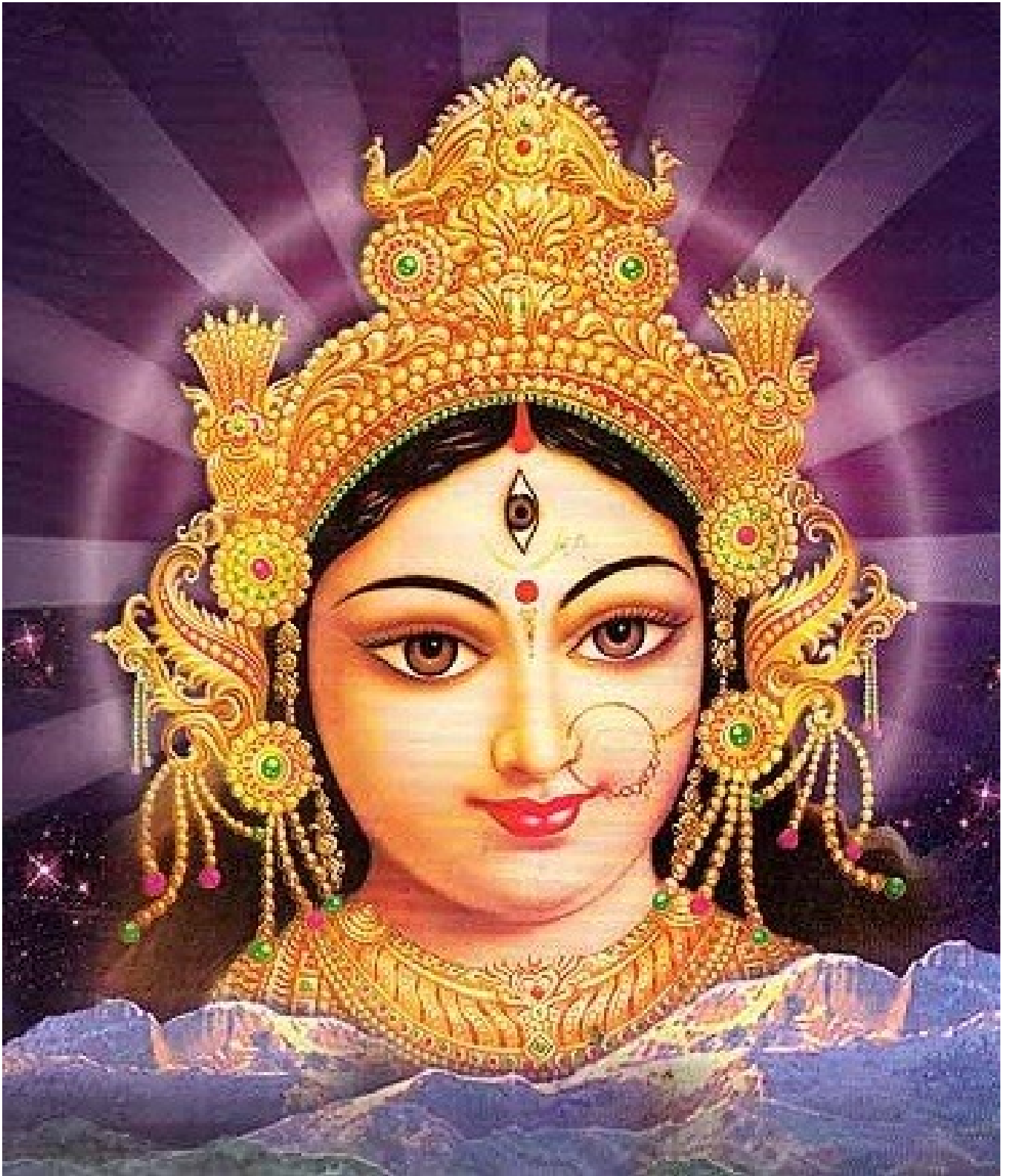
Figure 15 The platonic solids

As we can see in this figure it is a building block of 3 of the 5 platonic solids. The equilateral triangle is the simplest geometric surface because it has the minimum number of sides. Any image or shape can be expressed as a group of triangles (triangulation). It is also interesting to note how the number 3 is considered holy in many religions. The holy trinity comes to mind as well as the many trinities of the vedic knowledge (Vishnu, Shiva, Brahman), (Rishi, Devata, Chanda), (Sattva, Rajas, Tamas), (Vata, Pitta, Kapha), etc.

Does End of Sri Chakra (Yantra) Definition & Consturction Procedure

Sree Matre Namaha





Types Sri Chakra Archanas and its Procedures in brief

The Pancha Poojas

According to the traditional Vedic system, the Hindus are prescribed five daily Vedic pujas for all round prosperity and to ward off all evils. The pancha pujas are: Ganesha Pooja, Soorya pooja, Shiva Pooja, Devi Pooja and Vishnu Pooja.

There several types of poojas of these deities and some of them can take a whole day. The way a pooja is performed also varies depending on ones regional and traditional back ground. Various pooja books and websites prescribe long preparations and rituals for poojas. It is not possible for every one to perform a pooja like an ordained Vedic priest.

Hence our scriptures allow one to do a pooja “Yatha shakti” or as per ones capability and convenience. Doing it with faith is what really matters. The minimum is: light a lamp and an incense stick and offer some prasada – if you don’t have anything at home the simple milk or sugar will do. You can rest assured that that the Gods will not curse you! Preferably keep an idol or photograph of the deity.

Ganesha Puja Soorya Puja Shiva Puja
Devi Puja Vishnu Puja

But, the Ultimate Puja / Archana is Sri Chakra Archana / Upsana followed by Sri Vidya Upasana

Sri Chakra Puja / Archana / Upasana

Sri Yantra (Meru Form)



The worship of Devi in Shri Chakra or Sri Yantra is regarded as the highest form of worship. Originally Lord Shiva gave 64 Chakras and their Mantras to the world, to attain various spiritual and material benefits. For his consort Devi he gave the Srichakra and the highly coveted and the most powerful Shodashakshari mantra, which is the equivalent of all the other 64 put together. It has all the Devis and Devatas. Hence if you worship Sriyantra you need not worship any other yantra. It is worshiped in the flat plate form and also in the Meru form. In the flat plate form the 9 Avaranas and the Bindu are represented by drawn lines and in the Meru form they are cut like a pyramid as shown in the photograph.

It is said that in the beginning God, who was one, wanted to become many and enjoy himself. As the first step to creation he created Devi – the total cosmic Female force. For the male part, out of his left he created Shiva, out of his middle he created Brahma and out of his right he created Vishnu. That is why many regard the Devi as more powerful than the Trinities and hence She is called Parashakti or Paradevi – Para meaning beyond . Brahma created the universe. Vishnu controls and runs the universe. Shiva along with Shakti is engaged in the eternal dissolution and recreation of the universe. The Bindu in the center of the Srichakra is the symbolic representation of the cosmic spiritual union of Shiva and Shakti. Apart from that the Srichakra also embodies countless number of deities and represents the whole of

creation. Hence by worshipping the Devi in Srichakra one is actually worshipping the highest ultimate force.

Sri Yantra Poojas



Katyaayanaya vidmahe Kanya Kumari Dheemahi Tanno Durge Prachodayaat

Tantra Raajaya Vidmahe Maha Tantraya Dheemahi Tanno Tantra Prachodayaat

Yantra Raajaya Vidmahe Maha Yantraya Dheemahi Tanno Yantra Prachodayaat

Mantra Raajaya Vidmahe Maha Mantraya Dheemahi Tanno Mantra Prachodayaat

Lord Shiva created 64 Yantras and 64 mantras of various deities to attain various objectives and siddhis. For His consort Devi, He created the Sri Yantra and the Shodasi Mantra which is the equivalent of all the other 64 Yantras and Mantras put together! That is why the Sri Yantra is called Yantra Raja and the Shodasi Mantra is called Mantra Raja. The Devi resides at the central bindu of Sri Yantra. There are total 108 Devis in the 9 avaranas of Sri Yantra. Ganesha, Soorya, Vishnu and Shiva reside at the four corners of the Sri Yantra. All the 8 Lakshmis, Saraswati, the Nityas, the Yoginis and in fact every Devi controlling each and every aspect of our life and the world reside in the Sri Yantra.

Sri Lalita Tripura Sundari



“Om Aim Hreem Srim Sri Lalita Tripurasundari Padukam Poojayami Namah”

Sinduraruna vigraham trinayanam manikyamauli sphurat
Tara nayaka shekharam smitamukhi mapina vakshoruham

**Panibhyamalipoorna ratna chashakam raktotpalam bibhratim
Saumyam ratna ghatastha raktacharanam dhyayet paramambikam –1**

The Divine mother is to be meditated upon as shining in a vermilion-red body, with three eyes, sporting a crown of rubies studded with the crescent moon, a face all smiles, a splendid bust, one hand holding a jewel-cup brimming with mead, and the other twirling a red lotus... 2

**Dhyayet padmasanastham vikasitavadanam padmapatrayatakshim
Hemabham pitavastram karakalitalasad hemapadmam varangim
Sarvalankara yuktam satata mabhayadam bhaktanamram bhavanim
Shrividya shanta murttim sakala suranutam sarva sampatpradatrim ..3**

The Divine Goddess is to be meditated upon as seated on the lotus with petal eyes. She is golden hued, and has lotus flowers in Her hand. She dispels fear of the devotees who bow before Her. She is the embodiment of peace, knowledge (vidyaa), is praised by gods and grants every kind of wealth wished for.

Sri Chakra (Sri Yantra) Pooja



“Om Aim Hreem Srīm Sri Lalita Tripurasundari Padukam Poojayami Namah”

Chakra pooja or Yantra pooja is the worship of a deity in a diagrammatic form. This type of worship exists in a lot of the other parts of the world also.

The worship of Devi in Srichakra is regarded as the highest form of the Devi worship. Originally Lord Shiva gave 64 Chakras and their Mantras to the world, to attain various spiritual and material benefits. For his consort Devi he gave the Srichakra and the highly coveted and the most powerful Shodashakshari mantra, which is the equivalent of all the other 64 put together.

It is said that in the beginning God, who was one, wanted to become many and enjoy himself. As the first step to creation he created Devi – the total cosmic Female force. For the male part, out of his left he created Shiva, out of his middle he created Brahma and out of his right he created Vishnu. That is why many regard the Devi as more powerful than the Trinities and hence She is called Parashakti or Paradevi – Para meaning beyond. Brahma created the universe.

Vishnu controls and runs the universe. Shiva along with Shakti is engaged in the eternal dissolution and recreation of the universe. The Bindu in the center of the Srichakra is the symbolic representation of the cosmic spiritual union of Shiva and Shakti. Apart

from that the Srichakra also embodies countless number of deities and represents the whole of creation. Hence by worshipping the Devi in Srichakra one is actually worshipping the highest ultimate force in the Tantrik form.

The Shodashakshari mantra is one of the most guarded secrets of tantra. Usually the Guru gives it to a highly deserving and tested disciple. Very few get it. Even in the Mantra Shastra, where all other mantras are openly and clearly given, the Shodashakshari Mantra is not directly given. Several hints about the mantra are given and you are asked to get the mantra if you are capable and deserving. The opening versus of the mantra shastra chapter on Srichakra says, “Your head can be given, your soul can be given but the Shodashakshari Mantra of the Devi can not be given”.

Various books and websites on Srichakra have published what the publishers thought is the Shodashakshari Mantra. Let me make it clear that those who know it will never publish it and those who publish it do not know it. So don't waste your full moon nights chanting those long mantras.

However, Srichakra can also be worshipped by other Devi mantras. There are several traditions of the worshipping the Srichakra. We are giving here a very simple and still very effective pooja of Srichakra. It is known as the Srichakra Navavarana pooja as per the Khadgamala Vidhi. For all round spiritual and material benefits it is a highly effective pooja. Any one can perform it.

If you cannot do a detailed worship, simply worship the Sri Yantra 108 times with the simple Devi Mantra:

“Om Aim Hreem Srim Sri Lalita Tripurasundari Padukam Poojayami Namah”

Or better still with the Panchadasakshari Mantra, also known as Panchadasi Mantra) which is one of the greatest mantras of Devi and next only to the Shodasi Mantra:

कएईलहीं हसकहलहीं सकलहीं

“Ka E i La Hreem – Ha Sa Ka Ha La Hreem – Sa Ka La Hreem”

The Basics of Sri Yantra: Before starting the worship it is advisable to know about the way the Sri Yantra is constructed, what all it represents, about the 9 Avaranas, the deities, their gunas and significance, so that your worship is more meaningful. The following are the authentic details as given in various Tantra & Mantra scriptures.

Five downward pointing triangles representing Devi intersect with four upward pointing triangles representing Siva, forming 43 triangles including the central triangle.

From the five Shakti triangles comes creation and from the four Shiva triangles comes the dissolution. The union of five Shaktis and four Fires causes the chakra of creation to evolve.

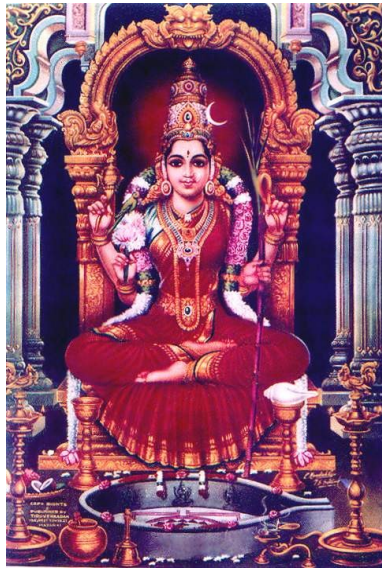
At the centre of the bindu of the Shri Yantra is Kamakala, which has three bindus. One is red, one is white and one is mixed. The red bindu is Kurukulla the Female form, the white bindu is Varahi the Male form, and the mixed bindu is the union of Shiva & Shakti – the individual as the potential Shri Cakra. Varahi, the father-form, gives four dhatus to the child and Kurukulla, the mother-form, gives five dhatus to the child. These represent the nine dhatus of the human body.

Varahi's four fires are the 12 (4 x 3) sun Kalas, the 12 Zodiac constellations. Kurukulla's five triangles are the 15 (5 x 3) Kalas of the moon, 15 lunar Tithis.

These nine triangles also represent the nine stages of growth of the human child in the womb. Surrounding the 43 triangles formed by the intersection of the nine triangles is the 16 petals circle. Surrounding the 16 petal circle is an 8 petal circle. After that the 3 lines and at the outermost part of the Sriyantra there are 3 lines called the Bhupura.

The 43 triangles constitute the six inner sections called Avaranas, the two circles of petals are two more avaranas and the Bhupura of 3 lines is the last Avarana.

These 9 Avaranas of the Sri Yantra have various presiding Devis. They are the Devi's Parivar (retinue) of total 108. In the Srichakra pooja they are systematically worshipped one by one with their names and mantras. The presiding Deity of Srichakra, Devi, is Known as Lalita Tripura Sundari. The form of Devi Kamakshi of Kancheepuram is the closest resemblance of the Devi as described in the scriptures.



Lalita means The One Who Plays. All creation, manifestation and dissolution is considered to be a play of Devi. Tri-Pura means the three worlds and Sundari means beauty. She is the transcendent beauty of the three worlds.

Tripura also signifies:- She is the ruler of the the three gunas of Satva, Rajas and Tamas; and sun, moon and fire – the zodiac and the planets, and therefore Time itself; She is also “tripura” as Will (Iccha), Knowledge (Jnana) and Action (Kriya). She is also “tripura” as intellect, feelings & physical sensation; and She is triple as the three states of the soul – awakening, dreaming and -sleeping states. Her five triangles also represent the Pancha Tatwas and the Pancha Bhootas. (This is what the verse in Lalita Sahasranama means by -”Panchami pancha bhuteshi pancha sankhyopacharini “. It is difficult to say what She is not.

Lalita holds five flowery arrows, noose, goad and bow. The noose represents attachment, the goad represents repulsion, the sugarcane bow represents the mind and the flowery arrows are the five sense objects.



The Nava Avaranas (Nine Corridors) of the Sri Yantra

Sri Chakra worship is one of the most guarded secrets of tantra and the Sri Yantra is the most guarder Yantra.

***Nairutaicha Ganeshanaam Sooryam Vayuvya eevacha
Eeshane Vishnu Agneye Shivamchaiva prapoojayet***

When you sit facing the east and with the tip of the top triangle pointing at you, at the bottom right hand side corner of the Srichakra is guarded by Lord Ganesha. The bottom left hand side corner is guarded by Lord Surya. The top left side corner is guarded by Lord Vishnu and the top right corner of the Srichakra is guarded by Lord Shiva. They must be worshipped before starting the Pooja of the Nava-Avaranas.

After that the eight primordial directions are guarded by the eight Lokapalas. Indra guards the East, Agni guards the South East, Yama guards the South, Nirriti guards the South West, Varuna guards the West, Vayu guards the North East, Soma guards the North and Ishana guards the North East.

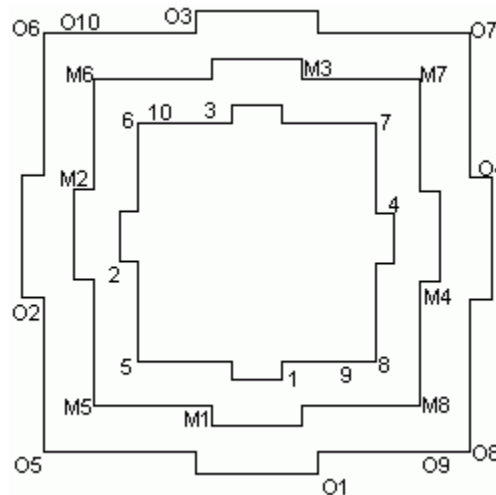
As if this is not enough, each of the first eight Avaranas are guarded by eight Bhairavas and eight Bhairavis! What is more these 64 pairs of Bhairavas & Bhairavis are assisted by 10 million yoginis each – total 640 million (64 crores). This is what the verse in Lalita Sahasranama says –

”Maha chatu-shshashti-koti yogini ganasevita ..”

Yes. Reaching Her is a bit difficult!

The nine avaranas as per Mantra Mahodadhi

The First Avarana – 3 lines



The 3 lines of the 1st Avarana & the position of the various deities

The outermost 3 lines known as Bhupura form the first Avarana of the Sri Yantra. This is known as the Trilokya Mohana Chakra and the worshiper knowing its inner secrets can mesmerise the 3 worlds. It is ruled by a Yogini Devi called Prakata Yogini. The Deity of this is Tripura. The beeja of this Avarana is Am Aam Sauh. The gem is topaz. The time is 24 minutes (360 breaths). The mudra to be shown is Kshobha Mudra.

The 1st line:

The Outer line (of the 3 lines) has 10 Devis known as Siddhi Devis. Their luster is like that of molten gold, they hold the goad in their right hands and the noose in their left hands. They are very auspicious and bestow heaps of gems and jewels to the worshiper. They are placed as shown in the above picture. They are:

O1-Anima Sidhyamba

O2-Laghima Sidhyamba

O3-Mahima Sidhyamba

O4-Ishvita Sidhyamba

O5-Vasitva Sidhyamba

O6-Prakamya Sidhyamba

O7-Bhukti Sidhyamba

O8-Ichha Sidhyamba

O9-Prapti Sidhyamba

10-Sarvakama Sidhyamba

The 2nd line:

The 2nd or Middle line has eight Matraka Devis. They are bedecked in all ornaments. They hold in their hands Vidya (book), Trident, Shakti, Chakra (Discus), Club, Thunderbolt, Baton & Lotus. They bestow to the worshiper everything desired.

M1-Sri Brahmi Matraka

M2-Sri Maheswari Matraka

M3-Sri Koumari Matraka

M4-Sri Vishnavi Matraka

M5-Sri Varahi Matraka

M6-Sri Mahendri Matraka

M7-Sri Chamunda Matraka

M8-Sri Mahalakshmi Matraka

The 3rd line:

The innermost third line has 10 Mudra Shaktis. They are of red hue and rule the various mudras and bestow spiritual boons to the worshiper.

1-Sarvasankshobhini Devi

2-Sarvavidravini Devi

3-Sarvakarshini Devi

4-Sarvavashankari Devi

5-Sarvonmadini Devi

6-Sarvamahankusha Devi

7-Sarvakhechari Devi

8-Sarvabeeja Devi

9-Sarvayoni Devi

10-Sarvatrikhanda Devi



The Nava Avaranas (Nine Corridors) of the Sri Yantra

The 2nd Avarana:

It has 16 petals circle known as Sarvaash Paripooraka Chakra meaning the fulfiller of all desires.

The presiding form of Lalita in this Avarana is Tripureshi. She is ornamented with all gems, carries a book and a rosary. The Yogini residing here is called Gupta Yogini. The 16 Devis of this Avarana are called the Nitya Kalas, also Nitya Devis, also

Akarshana Devis and also Gupta Yoginis. They are of red hue and each holds a noose, a goad, pot of nectar and make the sign of giving boons. They rule the 16 Sanskrit vowels from a to ah. By worshiping them one gets power over mind, ego, sound, touch, sight, taste, smell, intellect, steadiness, memory, name, growth, etheric body, rejuvenation, and physical body.

The 16 Yoginis represent the 16 vowels of Sanskrit language, and are worshipped with the 16 vowels as their beeja mantras.

The gem of this Avarana is sapphire. The dhatu is chyle (the first product of the disintegration of food by the biological fires). The time is three hours (2700 breaths). The beeja mantra is Aim Klim Sauh.

The Mudra of this Avarana is the Dravini Mudra.

The 16 Devis in sequence are:

1. Kamakarshini shakti
2. Budhyakarshini shakti
3. Ahankarakarshini shakti
4. Shabdakarshini shakti
5. Sparshakarshini shakti
6. Rupakarshini shakti
7. Rasakarshini shakti
8. Gandhakarshini shakti
9. Chittakarshini shakti
10. Dhyryakarshini shakti
11. Smrutyakarshini shakti
12. Namakarshini shakti
13. Beejakarshini shakti

14. Atmakarshini shakti

15. Amrutakarshini shakti

16. Sharirakarshini shakti

The 3rd Avarana:

It has 8 petal circle known as Sarva Sankshobhana Chakra. The preceding form of Lalita in this Avarana is Tripura Sundari. The Yogini is Guptatara Yogini. She is swaying in a love intoxicated state, with her eyes full of bliss. She smiles with passion and shows the mudras dispelling fears and granting boons.

The eight Devis in each of the eight petals have the colour of Bandhuka flowers. They are holding noose, goad, blue lotus and are dispelling fear. They represent Speech, Holding, Walking, Excreting, Pleasure, Abandoning, Concentration and Detachment. They have the eight Ka class letters as their beejas.

The beeja mantra of this Avarana is Hrim Klim Sauh. The gem is cat's eye. The dhatu is Flesh. The time is day and night (21600 breaths).

The mudra of this Avarana is Aakarshana Mudra.

The 8 Devis in sequence are:

1. Ananga Kusuma shakti

2. Ananga Mekhala shakti

3. Ananga Madana shakti

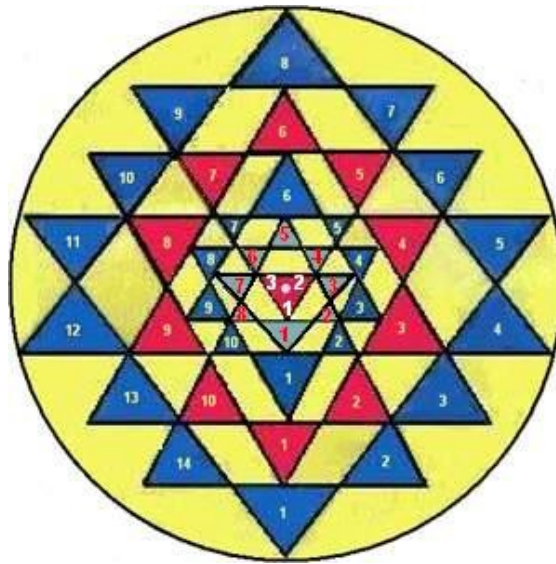
4. Ananga Madanatura shakti

5. Ananga Rekha shakti

6. Ananga Vegini shakti

7. Anangankusha shakti

8. Ananga Malini shakti



Picture showing the position of the Devis of 4th to 8th avarana

The 4th Avarana:

This Avarana of 14 triangles (Outer blue triangles in picture) represents the 14 worlds and the 14 main Nadis in the human body. It is called Sarva Soubhagya Dayak Chakra. The presiding form of the devi is Tripura Vasini. She is red and very beautiful. Fourteen Devis of the triangles are described as being proud, wanton, young, colour of cochineal, ornamented with gems, holding noose, goad, mirror, wine cup full of nectar. They are called Sampradaya Yoginis.

The beeja mantra of this Avarana is Haim Hklim Hsauh. The gem is coral. The dhatu is blood. The time is weekday.

The mudra of this Avarana is Vasya Mudra.

The 14 Devis are

1. Sarvasmkshobhini devi
2. Sarvavidravini devi
3. Sarvakarshini devi
4. Sarvaahladini devi

- 5.Sarvasammohini devi
- 6.Sarvasthambhini devi
- 7.Sarvajrumbhini devi
- 8.Sarvavashankari devi
- 9.Sarvaranjani devi
- 10.Sarvonmadini devi
- 11.Sarvarthasadhika devi
- 12.Sarvasampattipurani devi
- 13.Sarvamantramayi devi
- 14.Sarvadwandwakshayankari devi

The 5th Avarana:

This Avarana of 10 triangles (red triangles in the picture) is called Sarvarth Sadhaka Chakra. It is own as Bahirdasaram. The presiding aspect of Lalita is Tripurasri. She holds noose goad, a skull and dispels fear. She is of vermilion brightness. The Yoginis are called Kulotteerna Yoginis and also Kula Yoginis. They have the lusture of Japakusuma flowers and are adorned with shining gems and jwels. They are holding noose and goads and showing the gestures of knowledge, and giving boons. They represent the dasavataras and the 10 Vital Fires.

The beeja of this Avarana is Hsshoum, Hleesskhloom, Hssouh. The gem is pearl. The dhatu is Ova/Semen. The time is Lunar Day (tithi).

The Mudra of this Avarana is Unmada Mudra.

The 10 Devis are:

- 1.Sarva Siddhiprada devi
- 2.Sarvasampatprada devi
- 3.Sarvapriyankari devi

- 4.Sarvamangalakarini devi
- 5.Sarvakamaprada devi
- 6.Sarvadukhavimochini devi
- 7.Sarvamrityuprasamani devi
- 8.Sarvavighnanivarini devi
- 9.Sarvangasundari devi
- 10.Sarvasoubhagyadayini devi

The 6th Avarana:

This inner 10 triangle chakra (shown in red in the picture) is called Sarva Rakshakara Chakra and also as Antardasardam. The presiding aspect of Lalita is Tripura Malini. She holds noose and goad, dispels fear, and holds a skull. She is of vermilion brightness. The Yoginis are called Nigarbha Yoginis. They are the colour of 1000 rising suns, adorned with pearls and gems, holding noose, chisel, and showing the gestures of knowledge, and giving boons. They are the saktis of the 10 Vital Fires.

The beeja of this Avarana is Hrim Klim Blem. The gem is emerald. The dhatu is Marrow. The time is Lunar Fortnight.

The Mudra of the Avarana is Mahankusha Mudra.

The 10 Devis are:

- 1.Sarvagya devi
- 2.Sarvashakti devi
- 3.Sarvaswaryapradayini devi
- 4.Sarvagyanamayi devi
- 5.Sarvavyadhinivarini devi
- 6.Sarvadharaswarupa devi

- 7.Sarvapapahara devi
- 8.Sarvanandamayi devi
- 9.Sarvarakshaswarupini devi
- 10.Sarvepsitaphalaprada devi

The 7th Avarana:

This inner 8 triangle chakra (shown in Green in the picture) is called Sarva Rogahara Chakra. The preceding Devi is Tripura Siddhamba. She is described as the Destroyer of Poison. The Yogini is called Ati Rahasya Yogini. The Yoginis are the colour of pomegranate flowers, wearing red clothes, smeared with red scent, each carrying five arrows and a bow. These Devis are the rulers of Cold, Heat, Happiness, Sorrow, Desire, and the three gunas Sattvas, Rajas, Tamas. They are also called the eight Vasinis and rule the eight Sanskrit letter groups. They also represent the Astha Vasus.

The beeja is Hreem, Srim, Souh. The gem is diamond. The time is month.

The Mudra is Khecari Mudra.

The 8 Devis are:

- 1.Vasini Vagdevi
- 2.Kameswari Vagdevi
- 3.Modini Vagdevi
- 4.Kamala Vagdevi
- 5.Aruna Vagdevi
- 6.Jayini Vagdevi
- 7.Sarveswari Vagdevi
- 8.Koushini Vagdevi

The 8th Avarana:

This inner 8 triangle chakra (shown in green in the picture) is called Sarva Siddhiprada Chakra. The presiding Devi is Tripuramba. The Yogini here is Ati-Rahasya Yogini. Her Beejamaantra is Hsraim Hsrklm Hrsauh.

She is also known as Sampatprada Bhairavi. She has coppery effulgent, like a 1000 suns, with three eyes, a face like the moon, adorned with white gems, with a beautiful figure, rising swelling breasts, intoxicated, wanton, young, proud, holding book, dispelling fear, holding a rosary and granting boons.

The 3 Devis here are:

1.Kameshvari

2.Vajreshi

3.Bhagamalini.

Kameshvari is the Rudra Shakti – Parvati. She is white in colour, besmeared with camphor, adorned with pearls and crystal, and various other gems, holding book, rosary, bestowing boons and dispelling fear.

Vajreshi is the Vishnu Shakti – Lakshmi. She is bright as red kumkuma, adorned with flowers and gems, like the dawn sun. Her eyelids are smeared with sapphire dust, she holds sugarcane how, flowery arrows, bestows boons, dispels fear.

Bhagamalini is the Brahma Shakti – Saraswati. She is effulgent as molten gold, adorned with priceless gems, holds noose, goad, and shows the gestures of knowledge and bestowing boons.

The beeja is Hsraim Hsrklm Hrsauh. The gem of the mandala is Gomaya. The dhatu is Fat. The time is season (two months). The Mudra is the Bija Mudra.

The 9th Avarana:

This Avarana is the Bindu – the Cosmic Union of Shiva & Shakti as Kameswari & Kameswara. It is called Sarvanandamaya Chakra. The Yogini is the Queen of Queens, Rajarajeshvari, Her Transcendent Majesty Sri Lalita Parabhattarika Maha-tripura-sundari.

The beeja is ka e i la hrim. The gem is ruby. The dhatu is hair. The time is year. The mudra of this Avarana is Yoni Mudra.

Srichakra Navavarana Pooja - Khadgamala Vidhi

The basic Rules:

Devi worship must be done only after taking bath and wearing clean clothes. As per the rituals to be observed – various pooja books and websites prescribe long preparations and rituals for poojas. It is not possible for every one to perform a pooja like an ordained Vedic priest. Hence our scriptures allow one to do a pooja “Yatha shakti” or as per ones capability and convenience. Doing it with faith is what really matters. The minimum is: light a lamp and an incense stick and offer some prasada – if you don’t have anything at home then simple milk or sugar will do.

People worship the Srichakra made of various materials and in shades. The simplest and the best one is a clear diagrammatic picture. In the olden days people used to draw the Chakra on various materials. Now you do not have to go through all the trouble. You can use a simple printed one, which is equally effective. We have enclosed one for your benefit at the top. Take a print out of it to worship. Preferably laminate it so that it is not soiled or damaged.

While doing the pooja of the various deities in the Nine Avaranas, you can worship the Chakra with Akshintas (Turmeric rice) or flowers or with Panchamrut. A still better way is to worship the particular Devi in the places indicated in the pictures given in the previous pages.

The Devi is worshipped in many forms and names – Lalita, Katyayani, Kameswari, Kamakshi, Durga, Chandi, Kali, and Amba etc. The closest matching form of the Shodashakshari Devi as described in the scriptures is that of Goddess Kamakshi of Kanchi.



The Anganyasas and Karanyasa beejas are the purification ritual before the pooja. The basic Anganyasa & Karanyasa are given for the benefit of those who are conversant with this ritual. If you do not know you can omit it.

If you are conversant with the other pooja rituals like Aachamanam, Bhuta Suddhi, Dehasuddhi, Shankha pooja, Kalasha pooja etc., you can perform them before the actual pooja. If you do not know simply offer a prayer to Lord Ganesha and do the pooja. At the end of the pooja offer the following prayer.

***“Avahanam najanami, najanami visarjanam,
poojamchaiva najanamani kshamaswa Maheswari.
Yatkrutam yatkarishyami tathsarvam twamarpanam,
poojam poorna phalam kuru”.***

Roughly translated it means – “I am not conversant with the Aavahana, visarjana etc.. pooja rituals and hence forgive me. Whatever I have done and I am doing, I am offering to you. Give me full results”.

This pooja, along with the four other poojas that must be performed before that, will take about 45 minutes time but it is more effective than any other pooja both materially and spiritually.

When you sit facing the east and with the tip of the top triangle pointing at you, at the bottom right hand side corner of the Srichakra resides Lord Ganesha. The bottom left hand side corner resides Lord Surya. The top left side corner resides Lord Vishnu and the top right corner of the Srichakra resides Lord Shiva. They must be worshipped before starting the Pooja of the Nava-Avaranas.

After that the eight primordial directions are guarded by the eight Lokapalas. Indra guards the East, Agni guards the South East, Yama guards the South, Nirriti guards

the South West, Varuna guards the West, Vayu guards the North East, Soma guards the North and Ishana guards the North East.

The Sri Chakra Pooja

Karanyasa

Aim Angushtabhyam namah
Hreem Tarjaneebhyam namah
Srim Madhyamabhyam namah
Aim Anamikabhyam namah
Kleem Kanishtikabhyam namah
Souh Karatalakara prushtabhyam namah

Anganyasam

Aim Hrudayaya namah
Hreem Siraseswaha
Srim Shikhayaivashat
Aim Kavachayahum
Kleem Netratrayayaoushat
Souh Astrayaphat

Three Salutations to Devi

Om aim hreem Srim aim kleem souh Kriyashakti pithayai Shripadukam poojayami
namah
Om aim hreem Srim aim kleem souh Gyanashakti kundalinyai Shripadukam
poojayami namah
Om aim hreem Srim aim kleem souh Ichhashakti shri mahatripurasundaryai
Shripadukam poojayami namah

Nityayajanam (Pooja of Nitya Devies)

Om aim hreem Srim aim kleem souh - these bijas must be added before each of the
names from now onwards.

After the name add the beejas **Shripadukam poojayami namah**

Kameswari nityamba

Bhagamalini nityamba

Nityaklinna nityamba

Bherunda nytyamba

Vahnivasini nityamba

Mahavajreswari nityamba

Shivaduti nityamba

Twarita nityamba

Kulasundari nityamba

Nitya nityamba

Neelapataka nityamba

Sarvamangala nityamba

Jwalamalini nityamba

Chitra nityamba

Mahanitya nityamba

Parameswara parameswari devi

Mitreshamayi devi

Shastisamayi devi

Uddisamayi devi

Charyanathamayi devi

Lopamudramayi devi

Agastyamayi devi

Kalatapanamayi devi

Dharmacharyamayi devi

Muktakeliswaramayi devi

Deepakalanathamayi devi

Vishnudevamayi devi

Prabhakaradevamayi devi

Tejodevamayi devi

Kalyanadevamayi devi

Vasudevamayi devi

Ratnadevamayi devi

Shriramanandamayi devi

Prathama Avarana pooja

The 3 outer lines

The position of the Devis on the 3 lines is indicated by numbers

The First line

O1-Anima Sidhyamba

O2-Laghima Sidhyamba

O3-Mahima Sidhyamba

O4-Ishvita Sidhyamba

O5-Vasitva Sidhyamba

O6-Prakamya Sidhyamba

O7-Bhukti Sidhyamba

O8-Ichha Sidhyamba

O9-Prapti Sidhyamba

10-Sarvakama Sidhyamba

The second line

M1-Sri Brahmi Matraka

M2-Sri Maheswari Matraka

M3-Sri Koumari Matraka

M4-Sri Vishnavi Matraka

M5-Sri Varahi Matraka

M6-Sri Mahendri Matraka

M7-Sri Chamunda Matraka

M8-Sri Mahalakshmi Matraka

The third line

1-Sarvasankshobhini Devi

2-Sarvavidravini Devi

3-Sarvakarshini Devi

4-Sarvavashankari Devi

5-Sarvonmadini Devi

6-Sarvamahankusha Devi

7-Sarvakhechari Devi

8-Sarvabeeja Devi

9-Sarvayoni Devi

10-Sarvatrikhanda Devi

Trilokyamohanachakraswamini Devi

Prakatayogini Devi

Dwiteeyaavarana pooja

1. Kamakarshini shakti
2. Budhyakarshini shakti
3. Ahankarakarshini shakti
4. Shabdakarshini shakti
5. Sparshakarshini shakti
6. Rupakarshini shakti
7. Rasakarshini shakti
8. Gandhakarshini shakti
9. Chittakarshini shakti
10. Dhyryakarshini shakti
11. Smrutyakarshini shakti
12. Namakarshini shakti
13. Beejakarshini shakti
14. Atmakarshini shakti
15. Amrutakarshini shakti

16. Sharirakarshini shakti

Sarvasha paripuraka chakraswamini

Guptayogini

Truteeyaavarana Pooja

1. Ananga Kusuma shakti

2. Ananga Mekhala shakti

3. Ananga Madana shakti

4. Ananga Madanatura shakti

5. Ananga Rekha shakti

6. Ananga Vegini shakti

7. Anangankusha shakti

8. Ananga Malini shakti

Sarvasamkshobhini chakraswamini

Guptatarayogini

Chaturthaavarana Pooja

1. Sarvasmkshobhini devi

2. Sarvavidravini devi

3. Sarvakarshini devi

4. Sarvaahladini devi

5. Sarvasammohini devi

6. Sarvasthambhini devi

- 7.Sarvajrumbhini devi
- 8.Sarvavashankari devi
- 9.Sarvaranjani devi
- 10.Sarvonmadini devi
- 11.Sarvarthasadhika devi
- 12.Sarvasampattipurani devi
- 13.Sarvamantramayi devi
- 14.Sarvadwandwakshayankari devi
- Sarsoubhagyadayaka chakraswamini
- Sampradayayogini

The Panchama Avarana

- 1.Sarva Siddhiprada devi
- 2.Sarvasampatprada devi
- 3.Sarvapriyankari devi
- 4.Sarvamangalakarini devi
- 5.Sarvakamaprada devi
- 6.Sarvadukhavimochini devi
- 7.Sarvamrityuprasamani devi
- 8.Sarvavighnanivarini devi
- 9.Sarvangasundari devi
- 10.Sarvasoubhagyadayini devi

Sarvartha Sadhaka Chakraswamini

Kulotteerna Yogini

The Shastha Avarana

- 1.Sarvagya devi
- 2.Sarvashakti devi
- 3.Sarvaswaryapradayini devi
- 4.Sarvagyanamayi devi
- 5.Sarvavyadhinivarini devi
- 6.Sarvadharaswarupa devi
- 7.Sarvapapahara devi
- 8.Sarvanandamayi devi
- 9.Sarvarakshaswarupini devi
- 10.Sarvepsitaphalaprada devi

Sarvarakshakara chakraswamini

Nigarbhayogini

Saptmavarana Pooja

- 1.Vasini Vagdevi
- 2.Kameswari Vagdevi
- 3.Modini Vagdevi
- 4.Kamala Vagdevi
- 5.Aruna Vagdevi

6.Jayini Vagdevi

7.Sarveswari Vagdevi

8.Koushini Vagdevi

Sarvarogahara chakraswamini

Rahasya yogini

Banini

Chapini

Pashini

Ankushini

Ashtamavarana Pooja

Mahakameswari devi

Mahavajreswari devi

Mahabhagamalini devi

Sarvasidhiprada chakraswamini

Atirahasyayogini

Navamavarana Pooja

Shri Shri Mahabhattacharika

Sarvanandamaya Chakraswamini

Paraapararahasyayogini

Concluding Pooja

Tripura devi namah Dhyayami

Tripureshi devi namahAvahayami

Tripurasundari devi namah Asanam samarpayami

Tripurasidha devi namah Snanam samarpayami

Tripuramba devi namah Vastram samarpayami

Mahatripurasundari devi namah Abharanam samarpayami

Mahamaheswari devi namah Gandham dharayami

Mahamaharagyi devi namah Pushpani pujayami

Shrimatsimhasanaiswaryai namah .. Padou poojayami

Lalitayai namah .. Gulphou poojayami

Maharagyi namah .. Janghou poojayami

Paramkushayai namah .. Januni poojayami

Chapinyai namah .. Urum poojayami

Tripurayai namah .. Katim poojayami

Maha Tripura Sundaryai namah .. Nabhim poojayami

Sundaryai namah .. Vasitrayam poojayami

Chakranathaya namah .. Udaram poojayami

Samragyai namah .. Hrudayam poojayami

Chakrinyai namah .. Kantham poojayami

Chakreswaryai namah .. Oshtam poojayami

Mahadevyai namah .. Kapolam poojayami

Kameswaryai namah .. Dantapanktim poojayami

Parameswaryai namah .. Chubukam poojayami

Kamarajapriyayai namah .. Nasikadwayam poojayami

Kamakotikayai namah .. Bhroomadhyam poojayami

Chakravartinyai namah .. Netradwayam poojayami

Mahavidyayai namah .. Shrotradwayam poojayami

Shivanganavallabhayai namah .. Phalam poojayami

Sarvapatalayai namah .. Mukham poojayami

Kulanathayai namah .. Parswam poojayami

Amnayanathayai namah .. Shiram poojayami

Sarvamnayanivasinyai namah .. Padukam poojayami

Mahashrungaranayikayai namah .. Sarvangani poojayami

Mamahashakti devi namah .. Dhoopam aghrapayami

Mahamahagupta devi namah .. Deepam Darshayami

Mahagyapta devi namah .. Nivedyam samarpayami

Mahamahananda devi namah .. Tambulam samarpayami

Mahamahaskanda devi namah .. Neerajanam samarpayami

Mahamahashaya devi namah .. Mantrapushpam samarpayami

Mahamaha Srichakra nagara samragyidevi namah .. Pradikshana

namaskaram samarpayami

If you cannot do this detailed worship, simply worship the Sri Yantra 108 times with the Panchadasakshari Mantra, which is one of the greatest mantras of Devi and next only to the Shodasi Mantra:

क ए ई ल ह्रीं
ह स क ह ल ह्रीं
स क ल ह्रीं

Ka E i La Hreem – Ha Sa Ka Ha La Hreem – Sa Ka La Hreem



Om aim hreem Srim aim kleem souh **Shripadukampoojayaminamah**
(This must be added before every name) (This must be added after every name)

Kam Sarvasidhiprada devi

Kham Sarvasampatprada devi

Gam Sarvapriyankari devi

Gham Sarvamangalakarini devi

Gyam Sarvakamaprada devi

Cam Sarvadukhavimochini devi

Cham Sarvamrityuprasamani devi

Jam Sarvavighnanivarini devi

Jham Sarvangasundari devi

Egyam Sarvasoubhagyadayini devi

Sarvarthasadhakachakraswamini devi

Kulotteernayogini devi

Shashtavarana Pooja

Mam Sarvagya devi

Yam Sarvashakti devi

Ram Sarvaswaryapradayini devi

Lam Sarvagyanamayi devi

Vam Sarvavyadhinivarini devi

Ssam Sarvadharaswarupa devi

Sham Sarvapapahara devi

Sam Sarvanandamayi devi

Ham Sarvarakshaswarupini devi

Sarvarakshakara chakraswamini

Nigarbhayogini

Saptmavarana Pooja

Am Vasini Vagdevi

Kam Kameswari Vagdevi

Cham Modini Vagdevi

Tm Kamala Vagdevi

Tam Aruna Vagdevi

Pam Jayini Vagdevi

Yam Sarveswari Vagdevi

Ssam Koushini Vagdevi

Sarvarogahara chakraswamini

Rahasya yogini

Banini

Chapini

Pashini

Ankushini

Ashtamavarana Pooja

Kailahreem Mahakameswari devi

Hasakahalahreem Mahavajreswari devi

Sakalahreem Mahabhagamalini devi

Sarvasidhiprada chakraswamini

Atirahasyayogini

Navamavarana Pooja

Kam em eem namah shrishri Mahabhattacharika

Sarvanandamaya Chakraswamini

Paraapararahasyayogini

Tripura devi namah Dhyayami

Tripureshi devi namah Avahayami

Tripurasundari devi namah Asanam samarpayami

Tripurasidha devi namah Snanam samarpayami

Tripuramba devi namah Vastram samarpayami

Mahatripurasundari devi namah Abharanam samarpayami

Mahamaheswari devi namah Gandham dharayami

Mahamaharagyi devi namah Pushpani pujayami

Shrimatsimhasanaiswaryai namah .. Padou poojayami

Lalitayai namah .. Gulphou poojayami

Maharagyi namah .. Janghou poojayami

Paramkushayai namah .. Januni poojayami

Chapinyai namah .. Urum poojayami

Tripurayai namah .. Katim poojayami

Maha Tripura Sundaryai namah .. Nabhim poojayami

Sundaryai namah .. Vasitrayam poojayami

Chakranathaya namah .. Udaram poojayami

Samragyai namah .. Hrudayam poojayami

Chakrinyai namah .. Kantham poojayami

Chakreswaryai namah .. Oshtam poojayami

Mahadevyai namah .. Kapalam poojayami

Kameswaryai namah .. Dantapanktim poojayami

Parameswaryai namah .. Chubukam poojayami

Kamarajapriyai namah .. Nasikadwayam poojayami

Kamakotikayai namah .. Bhroomadhyam poojayami

Chakravartinyai namah .. Netradwayam poojayami

Mahavidyayai namah .. Shrotradwayam poojayami

Shivanganavallabhayai namah .. Phalam poojayami

Sarvapatalayai namah .. Mukham poojayami

Kulanathayai namah .. Parswam poojayami

Amnayanathayai namah .. Shiram poojayami

Sarvamnayanivasinyai namah .. Padukam poojayami

Mahashrungaranayikayai namah .. Sarvangani poojayami

(Recite either Lalita Sahasranama or Lalita Trishati or Lalita Ashtottara

Shatanamavali)

Om Aim Hreem Srim Aim Kleem Souh

Mamahashakti devi namah .. Dhoopam aghrapayami

Mahamahagupta devi namah .. Deepam Darshayami

Mahagyapta devi namah .. Nivedyam samarpayami

Mahamahananda devi namah .. Tambulam samarpayami

Mahamahaskanda devi namah .. Neerajanam samarpayami

Mahamahashaya devi namah .. Mantrapushpam samarpayami

MahamahaSrichakranagarasamragyidevi namah .. Pradikshana
namaskaram samarpayami

**Sadhuva Sadhuvakarma
yadyadacharitamaya
Tatsarvam krupaya devi
gruhanaaraadhanam mama**

**Devanatha guruswamin
desikaswatmanayaka
Trahi Trahi krupa sindho poojam
poornataram kuru..**

Srividya – Srichakra

Srichakra
Srividya Amnaya Krama

Traipura Siddhanta

Tithi Nitya Dhyana Sopana
Srividya Upasana Rahasya

Srividya Upasana Tattva

Bhoga Moksha Pradayini

Adhikara Bheda

Kadi - Hadi – Sadi

Sabija Srichakra

Mudra Prakasha

Srividya Rajagopala

Oghatraya and

Ardhanarishvara

Anga Navaka

Kula

Khadgamala

KAmeswara

Samkshepa Puja

Devimana Ashtanga

Hadi Mata

Tattva Sandoha Puja

Srividya Stotras

Shodashi

Trikhanda

Aksharasamkhyā Nirdeśa

Srichakra Mahima

Sripurṭi Vidya

Shadakshari Bala

Krama Shodha Nyasa

The greatest symbol of the Cosmos.

Srikula Amnaya and Guru Mandala Krama.

Concepts of Tripura, Thirty-six Tattvas and Shabda-Artha Srsthi.

The Meditation forms of fifteen Tithi Nitya Deities.

The esoteric aspects of Srividya Upasana.

An enlightening article on Srividya Upasana by 'Lopamudra' Smt. Prakashamba of Guhananda Mandali.

The uniqueness of Srividya.

Recommended paths of Upasana for Dvijas.

The Triveni of Srividya.

Inscribing Bijaksharas inside the Srichakra.

An overview of Srividya Mudras.

A synthesis of Sundari and Shyamasundara.

The subtleties of Shambhava Siddhanta.

The nine limbs of Srividya.

An alternate interpretation.

The Maalaa Mantra of Mahatripurasundari.

The Consort of Maha Kameswari.

The shorter forms of worship of Srichakra.

The Shakta Calendar.

The Amnaya scheme for Hadi Mata.

The worship of the thirty-six Tattvas

A list of important Stotras relevant to Srividya Tantra.

The sixteen letters.

Significance of the Mudra.

Numerological aspect of Srividya.

The Greatness of Srichakra.

The thirteen lettered mahAvidya.

An Analysis on the Purvanga Vidya.

The Nyasa Methodology.

Srichakra

Srichakra is the diagrammatic representation of Shiva-Shakti in the Cosmic and the individual aspects. In the Hindu Tantras, there are three kinds of external symbols used for worship of the Supreme Being who is Himself formless and nameless. The most external is the image cast in the human forms but with paraphernalia signifying supra-human divinity. The last and the subtlest are the Mantras, which are Divine sounds or Bijaksharas or letters indicating certain indeclinable seed sounds. A Mantra is divine power clothed in sound. Between these two come Yantras, also called Chakras, which are representations of the Deity in geometrical diagrams.

The Srichakra is conceived as Shiva-Shakti in the macrocosmic as well as in the microcosmic aspects i.e. as the cosmos and the individual. The Chakra consists of a series of nine triangles superimposed around a central point called Bindu, forming forty-three Konas or triangular projections. In the center is the Bindu, representing Shiva-Shakti in union in the causal state from which all the other parts of the diagram representing the cosmos are evolved. The Bindu is in a central triangle with apex downwards in the Samhara Chakra of the Kaulas, but in the Srishti Chakra of the samayins, it is below the base of the central triangle with its apex upwards. Enclosing it and superimposed on one another are the four Shiva triangles with apexes upward and five Shakti triangles (inclusive of the inner triangle) with apexes downward. Two circles of lotuses, one with eight petals and the other with sixteen petals surround these. Outside these, are three circles around and a rectangular enclosure (Bhupura) of three lines for the entire Chakra, with four entrances on the four sides.

The central Bindu stands for Shiva-Shakti in the causal state of creation. Shakti is here represented as Mahatripurasundari, the great Mother or the incomparable beauty of the three Puras or three Bindus. The Bindu represents the initial pushing forth of massive or ghanlbhUtA Shakti, with the potentiality of the universe within itself. It is spoken of as three to indicate the three stresses when the unified non-dual Shiva- Shakti seem to separate into two aspects Prakasha (the Aham or I consciousness) and Vimarsha (the idam or this-consciousness). These three stresses are technically called Nada, Kalaa and Bindu. Naada is the inchoate sound movement (interpreted by human ear as Omkara) and Kalaa is the Kaama Kalaa, the desire to create, which the Vedas represent as 'May I be many'. Bindu is the potential universe ready to separate into various categories. All these three stresses of Shiva-Shakti together are represented by the central red Bindu with an imaginary

line across it to represent the polarity in the supreme category as Shiva-Shakti. The great Bindu, the threefold stress of the externalizing or creative Shakti is indeed the divine mother Mahatripurasundari. She is described as 'puramathiturAho puruShika' in the seventh verse of Saundaryalahari, popularly interpreted as the 'Pride of Shiva'. It however really means that Shiva as Prakasha (Luminosity or consciousness) realizes Himself as 'I am', through Her, the Vimarsha Shakti (the Object as the reflector).

The rest of the Srichakra represents the whole of the Brahmanda (cosmos) as evolved from the Bindu, standing for Mahatripurasundari. Surrounding the Bindu is a series of overlapping triangles. These nine triangles constitute the nine basic categories of the universe, evolving from the supreme mother Mahatripurasundari represented by the central Bindu. Hence they are called Mula Prakritis or root substances of the universe. The Shiva and Shakti triangles are superimposed to indicate that Shiva and Shakti are involved in the whole process of 'Becoming' in its microcosmic and cosmic aspects. In the individual, they are present as the nine Dhatus or substances constituting the physical body. These are Tvak (skin), Asrk (blood), Mamsa (flesh), Medhas (fat), and Asthi (bone). These five categories are born of Shakti element while the evolutes of the Shiva elements constitute of shukla (semen), majja (marrow), prana (vital energy) and Jiva (the individual soul). On the cosmic side, the five constitutes of Shakti are the five elements (pancha mahabhutas i.e. earth, water, fire, air and space) and the five Tanmatras (subtle elements), the five karmendriyas (organs of action), the five Gnanendriyas (organs of knowledge) and Manas (mind)- these have their origin in the Shakti element, while Maya, Suddha Vidya, Maheshwara and Sadashiva form the Shiva element. Thus the nine basic triangles symbolize the twenty-five elements or Tatvas that constitute the cosmos and the individual bodies.

By the intersection of the lines of these nine triangles are formed forty-three Konas, in which is included the central triangle having the central Bindu. In all these Konas are placed the different letters of the alphabet, which stand for the Devatas, who are emanations (rashmis) of the only true entity Mahatripurasundari. They are the conscious forces governing the various powers of nature in the cosmos as well in an individual. These Devatas are not to be equated with the animistic spirits of the primitive man. For according to Srividya, Spirit is supreme and all nature consists of evolutes of that Spirit, of which what we call inert matter is only the latest evolute, having consciousness only withdrawn by the inherent power of Tirodhana (concealment). The Spirit, the Being-Power, is the one only, and what are called

gods and goddesses placed in the various parts of the Srichakra are only its manifestations for governing the various forces of nature.

The portions of Srichakra lying outside the forty four centers comprising the Bindu also are all supposed to be included in the latter- eight petalled lotus (Ashtadala padma) in the central triangle, the sixteen petalled lotus (sodasha dala padma) in the eight angled Chakra (Ashtakona), the three circles(mekhalaa traya) in the two ten angled chakras (Dashaara dvaya), and the surrounding space with the rectangular lines and four entrances (Bhupura) in the fourteen angled Chakra (Chaturdashaara).

The Srichakra is identified with the Sahasrara or the thousand petalled lotus. It is the ultimate source of powers namely Iccha (volition), Jnana (knowledge) and Kriya (action). It is these powers that manifest through the various organs of knowledge and action. All these organs are regulated by a central control in the brain, and that is identified with the Baindava Chakra or the Bindu Chakra of Srichakra. It is the seat of the Shiva, pure being, and is the Jyotirmandala, the sphere of light, because the eternal spiritual moon illumines it with its blissful light. This Sahasrara is also the source of the three nerve currents of physical significance. They are the Ida, Pingala and Sushumna respectively running on the left, right and center of the spine. Through the Sushumna runs a hollow canal called the Kula Path, which is closed at the end, above the level of the anus at the base of the spinal column. Whether these yogic nerves are to be identified with what are known to the anatomist as the afferent and efferent nerves and the Central Canalis is a moot question. It is better to conceive them as psychic factors relating to subtle body and having some correspondence with their physical counterparts.

At the bottom of the Sushumna against the level of the anus is the basic plexus known as Muladhara, described as a triangle with a lotus having drooping petals. This plexus is called the cave of Kundalini since Kundalini, the serpent power remains sleeping i.e. inactive there, after having completed its evolutionary purpose with the production of the Earth element, the last of the twenty-five categories. Just as Parashakti is the consort of Shiva, the Supreme Being, Kundalini is the segment of that cosmic mother as the Shakti of the Jiva, who is none other than an Amsa (particle) of the supreme Shiva embodied as the individual. It is this Shakti that evolves into all the twenty-five cosmic categories. The first four pure categories - Sadashiva to Maya are considered pure and therefore included within the Sahasrara itself and the remaining 21 categories are included in the six plexus or chakras described as lotuses descending along the Sushumna. Of these, Ajna

Chakra, located between the two brows is a 2 petalled lotus constitutes the mind (manas) element, which included the five organs of knowledge and action. At the level of throat is the Vishuddhi Chakra of 16 petals constituted of the element Akasha (space). At the level of the heart is the Anahata Chakra with 12 petals having the element air as its constituent. At the level of the navel is the Manipuraka Chakra with 10 petals and representing the Element water. At the level of the genitals is the Swadhishtana Chakra with 6 petals and fire element. Still below is the Muladhara Chakra mentioned before. Just as the cosmic Shakti Mahatripurasundari evolves these 25 categories which go to combine into the manifest universe, the individual aspect of the Shakti evolves into these centers representing the different categories and the body-mind, and having completed the evolutionary process sleeps or remains contracted or coiled up in the final category of Earth represented by Muladhara.

The main intention of Srividya is to rouse this Kundalini through the Japa of the supreme Vidya (of 15, 16, 18 or 28 letters) and concentration on the lotus feet of Mahatripurasundari, and leading this power through the Sushumna up to the Sahasrara in the head and uniting it with the Shiva there. This results in perfect Samadhi and by no other means is this possible. No spiritual activity is possible without awakening the Kundalini, though the way to do it is numerous. Tantras have declared Srividya and Kriya yoga as the fastest as well as the surest way to spiritual success.

In an unenlightened person, in whom the Kundalini is asleep, the Jnana and Kriya Shaktis function through the Ida and Pingala nerves that flank Sushumna. By the power of concentration and by the extremely powerful torrential energies generated by Japa of Srividya, and also by the Guru's grace, Kundalini is awakened and it forces its way up the Kula path. Along with its upward course, it gathers up also all the life energies that are functioning at the lower levels of the body, leaving those portions cold. For, all these energies are only what are dispersed from the Kundalini and therefore they are gathered up with the upward course of that power. As the Kundalini touches one plexus after another, consciousness is raised to subtler levels, described in Vedas as seven higher spheres Bhuh, Bhuvah etc.

The Kula path and the Chakras are divided into three segments - Brahma Granthi up to the Swadhishtana which is considered to be the region of fire and of darkness., Vishnu Granthi up to Anahata which is the region of sun and of alternating light and darkness and Rudra Granthi up to Ajna which is the region of the pure light of the moon. The Sahasrara at the topmost end of the Kula path is the region of eternally

blissful (Sacchidananda) spiritual moon, which is different from the moonlight at Ajna Chakra. In case of aspirants who get absorption in Shiva Shakti in the Sahasrara (which is what Srividya teaches and brings about eventually as opposed to most other traditions wherein meditation and absorption should begin in lower Chakras and proceed higher up. This indeed is one of the vast number reasons that take the doctrine of Srividya much beyond the realms of any other Tantra) all these Chakras are also absorbed in the Sahasrara, so long as the Samadhi lasts. As the six Chakras are gross manifestations of the Sahasrara, it is natural for them to get absorbed in their matrix along with the rise of the Kundalini and manifest again (if the aspirant knows the Vijnana) when the Kundalini descends. Now, it is in this part of descending the Kundalini, after having the bliss of Shiva - Shakti communion and consuming the resulting Kulamrita, having clarified it according to ones Sampradaya, do other Chakras like Lalaata, Lalanaa, Golataa and Indra nadi come into picture. These Chakras are very subtle and Tantras forbid their discussion with the uninitiated. So I omit these. However for a generic view of these one may refer to the Kulamrita Chapter in the Yoga section of Rudrayamala.

Thus the Srichakra is made into a comprehensive symbol for worship and identification with/of Mahatripurasundari who is Parabrahman-Chit Parashakti one. This allows both who follow Samayachara through the external worship of the Srichakra in the Mahakasha (external sky) as well as for the true Samayacharins who do worship internally without any external symbols and rituals through meditation in the Daharakasha.

Srichakra is that great abode of power into which Shiva Shakti have converted themselves for blessing their children. They are ever present there and devotees can commune with them through it. This is not a mere statement and all those who have worshipped and meditated on Srichakra, having duly taken an initiation from sad guru will swear by this. Though this communion is possible in a physical sensory level, for an ardent and true follower of Samayachara this communion is purely internal. In the Manipuraka they worship Kundalini as the great mother Mahatripurasundari, who has already been awakened by the Shambhava Mahavedha done by the Guru. She is raised to Anahata where she is adored in the Daharakasha and then raised to Ajna Chakra from where she quickly unites with Shiva in Sahasrara. How a person can return back to lower Chakras and continue to live as a Jivanmukta or a Siddha depends on grace of mother Mahatripurasundari and also if the aspirant knows the secretive procedure of achieving Vijnana from Jnana. Else after 21 days of Samadhi he gives up all earthy shackles and merges with

Mahatripurasundari. The process of descent again should be learnt through one's own guru directly.

In the Srichakra, in the srishti krama (order of evolution), there are five triangles termed as Shaktis. A triangle with a downward apex is called a Shakti, whereas an upward one is called Vahni. In Srichakra, there are five Shaktis and four Vahnis. When, due to the good fortune of the entire universe, Parashakti of the form of Vimarsha wants to project out the entire universe, hidden in herself, an evolutionary process begins. Shiva Parabrahman remains unmoved and the great mother Parashakti herself results in the evolution of the illusionary world. Parabrahman is without any implications of cause or action. His inseparable and eternal Parashakti appears in various forms as Jnana (knowledge), Iccha (will power) and Kriya (action or dynamism). The so-called creation of the world is a pulsation in this great Shakti. When the evolution of the world constituting of the thirty-six Tatvas (elements) begins, Srichakra materializes at this point in time.

The first letter of the alphabet 'A' is without any form since the Vedas and the Tantras declare that 'A' represents Paramashiva or Prakasha. Aitereyaaranyaka has declared 'A'kara as Parabrahman. The letter 'Ha' represents Shakti or Vimarsha. A combination of the two results in 'Aham' with the anunaasika or the 'am' sound denoting the unqualified Brahman. According to Panini's Pratyayaahaaranyaya, 'Aham' denotes all letters (varnas) between 'A' and 'Ha' and thus the entire alphabet or matrikas. 'Ha' is also called Visarga and is responsible for creation of the universe. What is indicated here is that the entire universe is hidden in the Prakasha-Vimarsha-Harmony state, which is nothing but the Bindu. When sun's light falls on a clear mirror, it gets reflected on a wall as a light beam. Similarly, when light of Paramashiva falls on Vimarshaambaa, the beam or point of light called Mahabindu becomes evident. This indeed is the Baindava Chakra of the Srichakra. This itself is called Kamabindu since it is the seat of Kameswara and Kameswari, but in complete and perfect mutual harmony. A pulsation in this leads it to appear as Rakta (red) and Shweta (white) Bindus. From these Bindus, which result due to pulsation in Kamabindu (of the form of Aham), evolves the effulgent Chitkalaa. In the same way as ghee melts due to heat of fire, due to Prakasha, a flow results in Vimarsha Shakti. This wave like flow in Vimarsha from in between the two Bindus is called Haardhakalaa. The mysterious Kamakala, ornamented with this Haardhakalaa gives rise to Baindava Chakra. More about Kaamakalaa, its esoteric form, conceptualization and meditation on it, Dhyana and Dhaarana aspects of it should again be learnt from ones Guru directly. Information on Kamakala Vimarsha can be obtained from Dindima Bhasya and some other lesser known commentaries on

Saundaryalahari and also from Punyananda yati's Kaamakalaavilaasa (this however is extremely technical and without a thorough background on Tantra and a knowledge of sandhyaabhaasa etc leaves the reader gasping or with misunderstood notions. Some very well known adepts in the pasts have written commentaries on this work, but sadly many have misinterpreted this great siddhavaani).

Just as waves rise in an ocean, the world constituting of the 36 Tatvas rise from this Baindava Chakra. This Baindava Chakra represents Madhyama, Pashyanti and Vaikhari vaks (forms of speech). These in turn are evolved from Para Vaani, represented by the original Mahabindu. It is to be noted that the Moola trikona (central triangle) is also referred to as Baindava Chakra since Bindu and trikona cannot exist without each other. This has been stated clearly by Bhagavan Hayagriva in the Lalitopaakhyaana of Brahmanda Purana. Also to be noted is the fact that the entire Srichakra is a mere extension of the basic Kamakala.

Actually Mahabindu is undivided, Shiva -Shakti -ONE in form. Visualization of this as Shweta and Rakta Bindus leads to division and hence duality, creating the foundation for externalization of the vast universe, which is as illusionary as the separateness of Shiva and Shakti. Creation has to be of two aspects: Vak (speech) and Artha (meaning) which respectively constitute of Para and Vaikhari and Shiva to Prithvi. This Mahabindu though being non-dual creates an illusion of being dual. This great Kamakala is the subtlest form of Mahatripurasundari. One who realizes this secret, by means of Srividya and worship of Srichakra will be liberated from all dualities and will attain Shiva hood. It is only one basic triangle that transforms into Shakti Chakra in evolution and Vahni Chakra in dissolution, in a triad, forming $3 \times 3 = 9$ triangles, which constitute of the Navayoni Chakra. Indication here is to the fact that nothing new is actually being created, but is actually a transformation of an already existing Baindava Chakra. Now, each yoni in this Navayoni Chakra represents Dharma, Adharma, four appearances of the same Atman (atma, antaratma, paramatma and jnanatma), maata(jiva), meya (object of comprehension by the Jiva) and Pramaa (the comprehension itself). This Navayoni Chakra is said to be completely filled and hence of the form Chidaananda. Chit means Chaitanya kalaa and Ananda means Vishwaahamtaa (experience of the world as Aham or oneself - Vijnana Bhairava). It is Mahat or great since it is full of chit and also because it is not limited by space, form and time. Hence it is greater than the greatest (mahatopi mahaan).

Baindava Chakra represents Mahabindu, which is actually Sadashiva Tatva. Since Shiva and Shakti Tatvas are placed above Sadashiva Tatva, this Chakra forms the

seat of Shiva and Shakti viewed as Kameswara and Kameswari or both-in-one as Mahatripurasundari. This Dhyana of Mahatripurasundari has been given to us clearly by Acharya in the 8th verse of Saundaryalahari. This is what has been told in the name 'Baindavaasanaa' in Lalita Sahasranama Mahamantra. If we rephrase what has been said earlier, Baindava Chakra is the seat of 'Aham' where 'A' is called samvartaanala (destructive fire that erupts during pralaya or the dissolution). All Tatvas from Shiva to Prithvi and hence the entire universe which is nothing but a congregation these Tatvas merge into this 'A' kara during dissolution. Hence the name samvartaanala. 'Ha' kara is also called Chitkalaa. The Mahabindu at the center of the triangle is what is 'Aham' and represents Ambika Shakti. The Navayoni Chakra with eight angles (Ashtakonas) is surrounded by the sixteen vowels. The rays of light that emanate from the bindu and Navayoni transform into Dashaara Chakra. The letters situated in this Chakra are 'Ya' to 'La'. It represents the five elements (earth, water, fire, air and ether) + the five tanmatras (smell, taste, form, touch and sound). These Tatvas represent Shiva Tatva and the letters signify Shakti. Thus we can conclude that Dashaara Chakra is Shiva Shakti Maya. This logic will apply to all the other enclosures or aavaranas and hence the entire Srichakra.

The next Chakra is the dvidashaara. It represents the 10 indriyas or sense organs and the residing letters are kavarga and chavarga letters. These two dashaara Chakras are thus twofold reflection of the great Mahatripurasundari seated on the Sadashiva or Mahabindu.

Next follows Chaturdashara Chakra, formed due to the collective light emitted from the previous 4 chakras namely bindu, trikona, ashtakona and dashaara-1 along with the light from dashaara-2. Since chaturdashara is farther away from those four Chakras, only their collective light will be seen here, but a clear and distinct perception of the individual lights and hence the corresponding Chakras will not be possible. However, dvidashaara being very next to it is clearly perceivable from chaturdashara. This chaturdashara is due to the pulsation in Jnana and Kriya Shaktis. It thus represents 10 indriyas, four antahkaranas (manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta). The presiding letters are 'ta' to 'bha'.

Earlier it was seen that Baindava Chakra was presided over by Ambika Shakti. Ashtaara Chakra to chaturdashara chakras indicate a dominance of Raudree Shakti. Thus, Chakra till now, is an extension of the powers of Raudree Shakti.

The chatushkona Chakra, which comes next is due to Jyeshtaa Shakti and mekhalaatraya is due to Vaamaa Shakti. This bhoomitraya also includes the adjacent sixteen and eight petalled lotuses.

Srichakra has been until now visualized as an abode of various Shaktis. An alternate visualization is its Kalaa form. The inner triangle and bindu represent Chitkalaa. The Kalaa associated with Ashtaara, Antardashaara, Bahirdashaara and chaturdashaara are respectively shantyaateeta, shanty, Vidya, pratishtaa and nivritti. Ambika and other Shaktis that were spoken till now are actually powers of Prakasha. Now association of Srichakra with powers of Vimarsha is as follows. In the nine aava anas or enclosures of the Srichakra, the nine residing Vimarsha Shaktis are Naada, bindu, kalaa, Jyeshtaa, Vaamaa, Raudree, Vishaghnee, Dootaree and Sarvaanandaa. Bindu and naada are actually of the form of Santa Shakti which is attributeless and hence also the corresponding Chakras - Chaturdashaara and the sixteen petalled lotus. Eight petalled lotus, presided by kalaa, is of the form of Iccha Shakti. Chaturdashaara chakra presided over by Jyeshtaa of the form of Jnana Shakti. Raudree and the rest, respectively reside in shaaras-inner and outer, Ashtakona, trikona and Bindu, all of the form of Kriya Shakti.

Thus, the Srichakra constituting of vaamaa and other Shaktis of the Prakasha Parabrahman is an extension of Kamakala, which in turn constitutes of the three Bindus. Now, in the same way as clay is the basis of existence and the very nature of a pot made of clay, Srichakra being an extension of Kamakala is nothing but Kamakala itself and so also the entire universe which is nothing but the Srichakra.

Akula Chakra is situated in the body at the place of origin of Sushumna nadi. This akula Chakra is a thousand petalled red lotus with up facing petals. Sushumna terminates with Sahasrara in the head region, which is thousand petalled white lotus whose petals face downwards. All lotuses extending upwards along the Sushumna except the Akula Sahasrara are said to be Kula padmas. The divine mother sharvaani resides in these lotuses. The distance between the anus and genetalia is said to be 5 angulas. Between this, at a height of 1 angula is a region called Kanda. Between this, there is a Mahayoni described as a triangle. Sushumna takes birth from its center. The shining Akula Sahasrara surrounds this place. Hence contrary to popular belief, Sushumna does not actually originate in Muladhara. At the center of Akula Sahasrara the great mother Kuladevi resides. 1 angula above Akula padma, there is another red lotus with eight petals and eight granthis(knots) in which Brahmani and the other eight matrikas reside with Asitaanga and the rest eight Bhairavas. Center of the lotus is the abode of Kaulikee Shakti. This lotus is

called vishu Chakra. 1 angula above this is the six petalled Kula padma. Then comes the Muladhara Chakra, which has four red petals, which face downwards. Between the lotus shines the Swayambhoo lingam. Around this Linga, along with Varadaa, Sri, shandaa and saraswathi, Bhagavati Kundalini is to be meditated. This lotus represents earth element. 2 1/2; angulas above this, there is a lotus with eight petals called taijasa padma yellow in color. The residing Shaktis are Anangakusuma and others. Mahamantra hrillekha resides at its center.

Then the well-known sequence of chakras follows starting from Swadhishtana. 4 angulas above throat is the subtle lambika padma (called Indra naadifor people familiar with Dasha Mahavidya Yoga this should strike a chord. this is the abode of Bagalamukhi (some authors misplace Bagala in throat which is actually the abode of Matangi and some in navel which again is the abode of Mahataara). In this lotus, vasini and the eight Vagdevis reside. Then follow Ajna and Sahasrara.

Srichakra may be visualized with each of its nine Chakras corresponding to these yogic Chakras with Bindu at Ajna. On a more subtle note, Srichakra is visualized at bindu, ardhachandra, rodhini etc till unmanee, which are located above Ajna, one above the other. These are different pronunciations of the Naada visualized suitably while meditating o the three naadas and the fourth aggregate naada of the three kutas of the Srividya mantra. Another alternative is to meditate on the entire Srichakra in Mahabindu, above all Chakras and even unmanee. This is possible by highly advanced Sadhakas and is the very essence of Samayachara. This is the highest and the most desirable of the three. These three visualizations are respectively called Sakala, Sakala - Nishkala and Nishkala Bhavanas of Srichakra.

Each of the nine Aavaranas of the Srichakra has a speical significance.

1. Trailokyamohana Chakra:

Here, the word Loka indicates Maata, Meya and Maana i.e the seer, the object seen and the act of seeing itself or in other words Kartru, karma and kriya. The compound of these three is Trailokya. This great chakra enchants these three i.e the trailokya and dissolves the three into a single non-dual entity which is what leads to complete Advaita.

2. Sarvaashaaparipooraka Chakra:

Here, the word Asha indicates the insatiable desires of the mind and the senses which lead us more and more towards duality. This great Chakra grants all desires by uniting its Sadhaka with the ever satisfied, all fulfilling, eternal Parabrahman or Paramashiva. This stage is indeed the Kamakoti the state of accomplishment of all desires or actually going beyond all desires by achieving the most desirable thing, which indeed is the liberating Brahma Jnana.

3. Sarvasamkshobhana Chakra:

During dissolution, all Tatvas right from Prithvi upto Shiva dissolve into one another. This great Chakra creates the destructive agitation (Kshobha) in all the Tatvas causing duality, thus dissolving any duality in the Sadhaka. It agitates and destroys duality in the sadhaka.

4. Sarvasoubhagyadayaka Chakra:

Saubhagya is something that is desired by everyone. This great Chakra grants the most desired object to the Sadhaka which is nothing but the great Paramashiva or Mahatripurasundari. What greater fortune or Bhagya does a sadhaka long for other than his beloved mother? Thus this Chakra is indeed Chintamani - Kalpataru - Kamadhenu, all put in one.

5. Sarvarthasadhaka Chakra:

The ultimate goal of all Vedic and Tantric rites and ceremonies is the attainment of Paramashiva. Various scriptures elaborate numerous methods to achieve this final beatitude. In the same way as all rivers merge into the great ocean finally, any of these legitimate means take the Sadhaka to the same destination. This great Chakra results in the Siddhi of all these paths or means i.e it grants the final Siddhi which is doubtlessly Parabrahma Prapti.

6. Sarvarakshaakara Chakra:

This great Chakra protects the Sadhaka from all forms and kinds of Avidya and duality, which are the only reasons for misery and grief. The visible world, constituted of the 36 Tatvas is impermanent and since these Tatvas grant Bhedadrishti or a sense of separation between the Atman and the Paramatman, the world has to be rejected as falsehood. By flooding the Sivaaham Bhavana (the sense of I am Shiva i.e the Advaita Bhavana) through the Sadhaka, this Chakra protects

him from the treacherous Samsara composed of 36 Tatvas, all leading to duality. When the Sadhaka realizes himself and the entire world as not separate from Paramashiva, he is automatically protected from Avidya. What this Chakra does is to destroy 'Idamtaa or sense of this' by the pure awareness of 'Ahamtaa or I-ness'.

7. Sarvarogahara Chakra:

There is no worse disease than Samsara which induces duality. Due to its constituent 36 Tatvas which are different from each other. This great Chakra destroys the disease of this Samsara which is the root cause of all other types of diseases. When Vamakeshwara Tantra and also the Mudra kanda of Rudrayamala speak of Khechari as destroying all diseases, this is what is hinted at.

8. Sarvasiddhiprada Chakra:

Yoginihridaya says that this Chakra indicates the potentiality to create - maintain - destroy the universe. As Pratyabhijnaahridaya says 'Chiti Shakti is indeed responsible for the Siddhi of the universe'. Thus, the trikona or the triangle Chakra is responsible for creation, destruction and preservation, while the other two acts namely Tirodhana and Anugraha are indicated by these three only.

9. The state of complete harmony of Shiva and Shakti exists in Sarvaanandamaya Chakra. Thus this Chakra is the very personification of eternal, limitless bliss. This grants Brahmananda to Sadhaka.

From the above verses, it becomes clear that though the nine charkas seem different due to their differing geometry, names, deity, Mudra etc.. the oneness or the non-dual aspect of all these is proved by the fact that all these represent the non-dual Paramashiva and hence the entire Srichakra is Parabrahman itself. Though there are no limits to the worldly boons obtained by worshipping Srichakra, the real purport of worshipping Srichakra is Parabrahmavapti.

Srividya Amnaya Krama

The Shloka 'Srinathadi Gurutrayeram' invokes the Gurumandala that is most important in Srividya Krama. It deals with the Mantras of the Amnayas of Srividya. It is said that from the five faces of Sri Parameshwara (Tatpurushaadi), the five Amnayas with their various mantras originated. The Sixth secret face of Parameshwara is what is termed 'Anuttara' and this is the seat of Parabrahma Shakti Mahatripurasundari. It is highly subtle and not revealed easily to a Sadhaka. The first four Amnayas (Purva, Dakshina, Pashchima and Uttara) are applicable to Panchadashi Upasakas. The eligibility for the higher two Amnayas i.e. Urdhwa and Anuttara is initiation into Shodashi and Purnabhisheka.

Srinathadi gurutrayeram –

This refers to one's own Guru (Srinatha), Parama Guru and Parameshthi Guru.

Ganapatim –

The Mantra of Mahaganapati and whose Upasana is a must before even initiation into Panchadashi.

Piithatrayeram –

The mantras for Jalandhara and Purnagiri and Kamaroopa Pithas, which are the first three Shakti Pithas of Amba and representing the trinity and their Shaktis - MahaKameswari and Mahavajreshwari and Mahabhagamalini. The fourth Peetham, Mahodyana and the seat of Parabrahma Shakti Mahatripurasundari has to be imagined in a state of transcendence over these three Peethas. Since the fourth represents the state of Turiya and it is imagined as existing in the state of absolute silence that exists between each of these Peethas and which are Actually states of Chitta.

Bhairavam –

The mantras for eight Bhairavas starting with Mahamanthana Bhairava etc.

Siddhaugham –

The mantras for nine Siddhas starting from Mahadurmanamba Siddha etc.

Vatukatrayam –

The mantras for the three Vatukas (Brahmacharis or Bhairavas) - Skanda and Chitra and Virinchi Vatukas.

Padayugam –

The mantras for Prakasha Charana and Vimarsha Charana of Sridevi.

Dutikramam –

The nine (ten according to some tantras) Duti goddesses starting from Yonyamba and Yonisiddhanathamba etc.

Mandalam –

The mantras for Agni and Surya and Chandra mandalas

Vira –

The mantras for the ten Viras starting from Srishti bhairava etc.

Then come the mantras for the 64 Siddhas starting with Mangalanatha etc.

Navakam –

The nine mudra mantras starting from Sarvasamkshobhini.

Viravali Panchakam –

The mantras for Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra and Ishwara and Sadashiva Viravalis.

Malini –

The Matrika Saraswati mantra.

Mantraraja –

Mantraraja Nrisimha mantra according to our Sampradya. Others follow Devi Taraka in its place.

Gurumandalam:

The Gurumandala proper includes mantras for Urdhwaugha, Parugha, Kamarajugha, Lopamudraugha and Paraaparugha, depending on one's Sampradaya. Each of these again has Divyaugha, Siddhaugha and Manavaugha Gurus in them.

Thus, this Shloka invokes all these deities who form the Amnaya Parivara and Gurumandala of Srividya Parabhattarika.

The shloka 'Purvam dakshiNa pashchimottaramayaM' speaks about the 27 Rahasyas or secrets. The above mantras along with a few other esoteric additions and the numerous mantras of the 6 Amnayas will constitute these 27 secrets of Srividya. Given below is a listing of the mantras in the various Amnayas.

Purvamnaya, the Eastern Quarter

Shuddha VidyA

Bala Tripurasundari (Adi Bala, Yoga Bala and Antya Bala)

Dwadashardha

Matangi (Rajashyamala, Shukashyamala, Sharikashyamala, Sangitashyamala, Venushyamala, Vinashyamala, Laghu Matangi, Hasanti Shyamala and Sumukhi)

Gayatri (Tripada and ChatuShpada)

Mahaganapati (Siddhi, Kshipraprasadana, Chintamani, Haridra, Lakshmi, Vakratunda, Viri, Kukshi, Trailokyamohana, Navanita, Arka, Kali, Heramba Vijaya, Shakti, Ugra and Mahocchishta Ganapati)

Subrahmanya (Skanda, Kumara, Guha, Subrahmanya and Brahmanya)

Mrityunjaya

Neelakantha

Tryambaka

Jaatavedagni

Pratyangira (Brahmi, Narayani, Raudri, Ugra Kritya and Atharvana Bhadrakali)

Dakshinamnaya, the Southern Quarter

Saubhagya Vidya

Bagalaamukhi (Brahmastra Vidya) - Ranastambhini, Senastambhini, Devarshipitrstambhini, Trimurtistambhini, Trailokyastambhini, Brahmastra Upasamharika, Brhamastrastambhini Kali

Mahavarahi (Vashya Varahi, Astra Varahi, Brihadvarahi, Dhumravarahi, Kirata Varahi and Strustambhana Vartali)

Vatuka Bhairava

Tiraskarini

Mahamaya

Aghora

Sharabheshwara (Sharabaha Kali)

Khadgaravana

Veerabhadra

Rudra

Shaastaa

Vayavyastra

Agneyastra

Bhairava (Anga, Aghora, Bhima, Vijaya, Rakta, Kala, Samhara, Kapala, Siddha and Swarnakarshana Bhairava)

Medha Dakshinamurthy (sixteen including Lakshmi, Kirti, Samba, Veera, Apasmaranirvartaka Dakshinamurthy etc)

Pashchimamnaya, the Western Quarter

Lopamudra (Hadi Vidya)

Bhuvaneshwari

Annapoornaa

Kamakala

Maha Sudarshana

Garuda

Kartaveeryarjuna

Narasimha

Rama and Seeta

Krishna (Srividya Rajagopala, Mahavaikuntheshwara, Rajagopala, Sanatanagopala, Vidyagopala, Guptagopala and Anna Gopala)

Dhanvanthari

Indrajaali Mahamaya

Indra and other Dikpalakas

Indrakshi

Dattatreya

Narayana ashtakshari

Vasudeva dvadashi

Uttaramnaya, the Northern Quarter

Tureeyamba

Mahaardhaa (Mahakalsamkarshini)

Ashwaroodha

Mishramba

Mahalakshmi

Vagvadini

Durga (Mula, Shulini, Jwala, Lavana, Shanti, Asuri, Shabari, Bhramari, Pakshi, Ati, Vanadurga)

Dakshinaa Kaali (Maha kali, Guhya kali, Kamakala Kali)

Navarna Chandi

Nakuli

Pulindini

Renuka

Matrika

Swayamvaraaa Kala

Urdhwamnaya, the Quarter Above

Paraa Shodashi

Laghu Shodashi

Paraa

Para Bhattarika

Para Shambhava

Para Shambhavi

Praasaada (Prasaadaparaa and Paraapraasaada)

Dahara

Hamsa

Mahavakya

Shiva Panchakshari

Shakti Panchakshari

Kula Panchakshari

Anuttaramnaya, the Quarter Beyond

Sripurtividya

Mahashodashi

Guhya Shodashi

Shodasha Mulavidyas

Atma Paduka

Maha Paduka (Maha Maha Paduka, Para Paduka, Guhya Paduka, Kula Paduka, Shambhava Maha Paduka etc.)

Traipura Siddhanta

The philosophy of Saktism is Advaita or Non-Dualism and the highest reality is termed as Paramashiva or Mahatripurasundari. Shiva is the static consciousness and Shakti is the dynamic consciousness or Chit-Rupini. Shiva is pure awareness, which is the basis of all existence. Through his Shakti, he effects the manifestation of the universe. He is the sole cause of the world. The ultimate reality is non-dual and is of the nature of pure consciousness. The universe of Forms and names are all aspects of the same ultimate Reality. It is the movement of Brahman, the 'Spanda' that brings about the distinction of Sabda (word), Artha (object) and cognition (Pratyaya). These three are the aspects of the Brahman's Primal Energy.

It is the causal impetus of the Divine, which makes them emerge out of itself. The world of sounds, things and thoughts- is the manifestation of the same non-dual Spirit.

The Tatvas (or divine principles) describe step-by-step how Supreme Consciousness makes itself, appear to itself, as limited consciousness stuck in a unconscious world and universe, and thus gets to experience the limited, conditional joys and sorrows of earthly existence, and then describes in a reverse step-by-step process, as to how that Supreme Consciousness then reveals its own true nature to itself, and thus experiences the outrageous joys of spiritual liberation.

The 36 Tatvas are divided into four groups representing the four stages of existence and creation, as well as the 4 states of awareness. These are:

1. The Physical Plane or Waking State: wherein we find the physical world, our physical bodies, and our waking state. Physical objects exist, change, and move around in a rigid structure defined by measurable time and space, according to the measured flow of energy as described in the rigid mathematically based laws of thermodynamics, all described in the rigid non-relativistic Newtonian Laws of Physics. This is the most superficial level of existence - a mere rigid shadow of the Subtle Plane of Existence.
2. The Subtle Plane of Existence, and Dream State: made up of the world of thought and dream objects experienced in the dream state, or seen as

thought images and objects in the mind during waking. It is also an entire plane of existence beyond the physical world whose objects are not limited by rigid laws governing change or movement in time and space. This is the realm of magic and dream where things change according to the power of one's will, desire, and need, and the only resistance is the power of one's own previous actions (Karma), or the will, desire, need or Karma of others. The Physical Plane of Existence is a mere rigid shadow of this level of existence.

3. The Causal Plane of Existence, and The Deep Sleep State: to the average person, this plane of existence and state of consciousness is experienced as a totally timeless, spaceless unconscious void - unconscious nothing. The average person experiences this every night during the deep sleep stage of sleep. To the conscious, it is experienced as completely totally void of any features or objects of consciousness, and they know it as the basic featureless unconsciousness "ground" from which all non-conscious objects spring that exist in the physical or subtle planes of existence. Thus this is the "non-conscious" ground from which the physical and subtle planes of existence continuously spring.
4. The Supracausal Plane, experience of Supreme Consciousness: unlimited consciousness - unlimited by time, space, thought, or any structures or processes. Has no features or characteristics except being just pure consciousness. This is the true nature of consciousness - unlimited and transcendent of all other planes of existence and the structures and processes they contain. This is the basic source of the creative energy from which the other three planes of existence spring.

The creation of the entire universe from pure cosmic consciousness takes place within the framework of these four planes of existence. This is described by 36 Principles (Tatvas) of cosmic creation, which are spread amongst the 4 levels as they describe the creative process as it flows down from Cosmic Consciousness to the physical level of creation. And it is these thirty-six Tatvas that also describe the process of cosmic destruction, and the process of individual awakening that happens in human beings (Kundalini) when they come to know of this directly. These 36 Tatvas also describe the process of Karma which determines the quality and nature of human life, of all life, and of the existence of the universe in the first place as it emerges from pure consciousness by the will and desire of God.

Supracausal Plane of Supreme Consciousness

This is the basic level of existence - of pure Cosmic Consciousness - Paramashiva - the totally unlimited Supreme Consciousness, that exists everywhere, is eternal, and from which everything is created, and will return to eventually. This Supreme Consciousness is completely devoid of objects, features, or anything else other than pure unlimited consciousness. But from this pure consciousness the entire world is created. This creativity is contained within two basic conscious principles: Shiva and Shakti. Reality, Paramashiva is transcendent, beyond the levels of matters, life and mind. It is without parts (and hence called Nishkala), without activity (Nishkriya) and beyond the reach of word (Asabda) and mind. The same Reality as the Cause of the world-process is called Ishwara. From him arise the five categories of pure, Siddha creation and then are the course of finitisation consisting in the emergence of the thirty-one categories composing impure (Asuddha) creation. The five categories (Tatvas) of pure creation are:

1. Shiva Tatva
2. Shakti Tatva
3. Sadashiva or Sadakhya Tatva
4. Ishwara Tatva
5. Suddha Vidya Tatva

Shiva Tatva, which is the first process in the order of world evolution, and is Chit, with its important aspect of power as Consciousness. It is pure, unlimited consciousness itself.

Shakti Tatva, a co-ordinate of the first Tatva, manifests as the aspect of Bliss or Ananda, the unlimited creative power of Supreme Consciousness. Shakti has 3 basic aspects through which it does the actual creating:

Ichha Shakti: The basic will or impulse to create.

Jnana Shakti: The basic knowledge or awareness of creation.

Kriya Shakti: The basic power to create.

Sadashiva Tatva is Sat, the stage where the experience of 'Being' begins. It is the power of Will or Iccha that is predominant.

In Ishwara Tatva, the power of Knowledge or Jnana plays an important role.

In Suddha Vidya Tatva, the power of action or Kriya dominates.

These five stages of Experience represent the gradual differentiation in the pure Experience, which serves as the basis of the evolution of the pluralistic universe.

At first, there is only the distinction less experience. Into this is introduced the condition of distinction by Shakti. In the Sadashiva Tatva, the experience of the form, "I am This" arises with the emphasis on "I". In Ishwara Tatva, the emphasis is on "This – This I am". In order that the universe of minds and objects may emerge, there should be a balance between "I" and "This". This is what is obtained at the stage of Suddha Vidya Tatva. Here, in the experience "I am This", the two get equalized. It is in such an experience that there is activity and movement of thought.

These five called Suddha Tatvas deal with ideal creation. With the rest of the thirty-one categories, which commence with Maya, begins the actual creation.

Causal Plane of Consciousness & Deep Sleep State

The activities of the supremely creative Shakti creates a condition of extremely limited consciousness stuck in a seemingly infinitely vaste unconscious world or universe, and this is what we actually experience of our consciousness - where we feel like our consciousness is so fragile, and so tiny - that it is stuck inside our heads, totally at the mercy of outside conditions, easily eradicated in a split second, as we struggle to survive in a huge totally non-conscious world which is dwarfed into insignificance within the incomprehensively vast non-conscious universe in which it wanders in endless circles until its inevitable fiery demise.

This sense of difference and distance and unconsciousness is actually only a creation of a veiling power of Supreme Consciousness - a Shakti called Maya. Maya works via five aspects of its veiling power.

Maya is the first of the thirty-one categories of impure creation and is the power of obscuration or "Tirodhana". It obscures the infinite spirit, and makes possible the rise of plurality of souls and things. Again, the limitless experience begins to be limited as regards the experiencer and the experienced, the "I" and the "This".

The next five categories are called Kanchukas or constrictors. They are the ones, which bring about limitation.

Kaala is temporal limitation. It veils the experience of the single supreme infinite moment to create the sense of the limited sequential flow of time.

Niyati is restriction in regard to space. It veils the experience of all-pervasiveness to create the sense of limited existence in one place stuck amongst vaste areas that are different and separate from you.

Raga is attachment to particular things. It veils Iccha (basic supreme will to create) to create a sense of a fragile, limited, weak will power.

Vidya is limited knowledge. veils Jnana (unlimited knowledge of supreme creation) to create the experience of limited knowledge and understanding.

Kalaa is limited agency. veils Kriya (unlimited power to act) to create the sense of limited power and abilities, and helplessness.

The soul enveloped in these agencies arises as Purusha and that is the seventh category. Thus is formed the basic experience of individuality separate from everything else; limited, helpless, relatively powerless, and limited in knowledge and understanding of so much that makes up the surrounding unconscious, mostly inaccessible world.

Thus is created the base level illusion of tiny limited consciousness existing insignificantly within an endless non-conscious expanse. That basic level of non-conscious expanse is called Prakriti, the eighth. But at this level, there is nothing to be conscious of - no worlds, or bodies, or even time or space. Thus, this stage is experienced as Void - non-conscious Void because all there is, is the basic state of limited individual consciousness without any instruments or organs to sense with, in a non-conscious expanse without any objects or features or characteristics to be conscious of. Thus, Prakriti is the corresponding limitation (with regard to Purusha) on the objective side.

Subtle Plane & Dream State

From the featureless ground of the Causal Plane (Prakriti), springs endless objects created out of pure consciousness by the Shakti-s of will, knowledge, and creative impulse. These objects by definition are limited and separate from each other - each and every characteristic moving and changing in time and space. These limitations are formed by the powers of limitation of the Shakti Maya (Kalaa, Vidya, Raga, Kaala, and Niyati).

First created, are the basic instruments of will and knowledge, which direct the implementation of the instruments and organs of perception and action. Then from this are created the instruments and organs of perception and action, and then finally come the subtle and physical objects.

The Antahkarana (instrument of understanding, sense of identity, and other mental operations), which operates both in dreams and waking, consists of three parts:

Buddhi: the instrument of detachable, abstract reasoning that can see and understand objects and processes being outside and different from oneself.

Ahamkara: sees everything only in relation to oneself. It assembles, understands, and believes in the limited, powerless identity of oneself.

Manas: the basic thought process of the mind wherein thoughts come and go before the consciousness like a movie. All of these thoughts consist of:

- (1) Buddhi understanding
- (2) Ahamkara understanding or
- (3) Memories of objects

These instruments of mental functioning then employ limited powers of knowledge and perception (Jnana Indriyas) which operate both in dreams and waking:

Srotra: Limited power of hearing.

Tvak: Limited power of feeling by touch.

Chakshu: Limited power of seeing.

Jihva: Limited power of tasting.

Ghrana: Limited power of smelling.

The instruments of mental functioning also employ powers of limited action (Karma Indriya-s) which operate both in dreams and waking:

Vak: Limited power of speech.

Pani: Limited power of grasping and handling.

Pada: Limited power of locomotion.

Payu: Limited power of excretion.

Upastha: Limited power of creation (procreation to be exact).

Here are the Subtle Elements (Tanmatras) that make up subtle dream objects, that are perceived and acted upon by the Jnana Indriyas and Karma Indriya.

Shabda Tanmatra: Sound

Sparsha Tanmatra: Touch

Rupa Tanmatra: Color

Rasa Tanmatra: Taste

Gandha Tanmatra: Smell

Gross Physical Plane & Waking State

Here are basic physical elements that make up physical objects (Bhutas) that are perceived by the powers of perception (Jnana Indriyas), and acted upon by the powers of actions (Karma Indriyas). This includes not only outside objects like cars and rocks, but also our bodies and the organs of perception and action by which we interact with those physical objects.

Akasha: Space

Vayu: Air Or Gas

Agni: Fire

Ap: Liquids

Prithivi: Solids

This is the evolution of the world of things i.e. Artha Prapancha. There is a similar evolution of the world of sounds called Shabda Prapancha. Here too the line of evolution is from the subtle to the gross.

Corresponding to the five categories of pure creation, there are five stages of the emanation of sound. The first is Para, which is supreme and subtle. The second is Pashyanti, which is less subtle but still undifferentiated. The third is Madhyama, which is grosser and differentiated, but not yet articulate. Articulate sound is called Vaikhari, which is of two forms, subtle and gross. It is from Vaikhari that all letters or Varnas and syllables or Padas and Sentences or Vakyaas are manifested.

Para, which resides in the Shiva Tatva, represents the first movement of Sabda. This is also called Nada Tatva. Pashyanti stands for Shakti Tatva and is also called Bindu Tatva. These are the compliments of the ultimate potency of creation. From these arise what is known as the Tribindu, which is the root of all mantras. The subtle and esoteric aspect of Kamakala has to be learnt from a competent Desika.

Thus the duality that manifests in every Jiva is lost when the Supreme Mother reveals herself within luminous effulgence and everything in the world and within each one of us, becomes the mantra Shakti. The breathing in and out becomes cancels out and the mind and senses turn inward. One loses body consciousness and the feeling of duality ceases and brings about the awareness of equality. Then

one experiences complete identification with the Shiva – Shakti one Parabrahman as Mahatripurasundari.

"Tat Tvam Asi" is the spontaneous utterance of liberation, We are that – as we play on the lap of the Divine Mother, basking in the luminosity of her Love. This is the culmination of all spiritual practices. Her presence lightens our life and nectarine bliss fills every pore of our heart.

Nilasaraswati sameta Sri Ucchishta Mahaganapataye namaH

Shivoham

Tithi Nitya Dhyana Sopana

The fifteen Nityas are the rays of the Supreme Adya Nitya or Maha Nitya, who is none other than Paraabhataarika Mahatripurasundari. Though the fifteen Nityas resemble Maha Nitya, it is only this great Parashakti, who is ever united with Sri Kameswara, the supreme Brahman.

Sri Parashakti becomes fivefold in the Bhutas, air, ether, fire, water and earth and by association of each of these with the three Gunas; there are the fifteen Nitya Shaktis who are rayed forth from her. They also represent the Tithis from Pratipat to Purnima or Amavasya.

In Srichakra, they are located in the Moola triangle, five at each side of the triangle. To obtain the grace of Sri Rajarajeshwari, the transcendent sixteenth Nitya, it is very much necessary to appease these fifteen deities. The Sadhaka of the fifteen Nityas becomes the abode of Siddhis and happiness. He is cheerful of mind, charitable, merciful, pleasing in appearance, forgiving, contented, free from all anxieties, wealthy and filled with the bliss of the self. He is the possessor of various Siddhis like Khadga, Paduka, Anjana, Nidhi, Bila and control over Devas, demons, Yakshas, Vetalas, Chetakas, nine planets, five elements and so on. The sixteen vowels of the Matrika represent the sixteen Nitya Shaktis. The consonants, 36 in number (considering them severally and as a group), represent the 36 Tatvas. The nine groups into which the letters are divided are the nine Nathas or the great Srividya gurus. The Nityas are identical with the universe, Srividya, Srichakra, Sri Lalita, Guru and the Self. The climax of the Nitya worship is in Para Homa, which marks the sudden revelation of Sri Maha Shodashi Nitya.

Sri Kameswari

Kameswari is the first Nitya and is the fulfiller of desires. She is lustrous red like ten million rising suns, wears a bright crown of red rubies and is adorned with throat ornaments, necklaces, waist chains and rings on her hands and feet. Her ornaments are set with gems. Her raiment is red. She is six-armed and three-eyes and carries the crescent of moon on her head. Her face is lit up with a soft smile and her eyes are merciful. She carries in her hands, a bow of sugarcane, arrows of flowers, noose

and goad and a cup made of gems filled with nectar. She makes the gesture of granting boons.

Worship of Sri Kameswari bestows one with happiness, wealth, family congeniality and mental peace, besides liberation of the soul. By destroying diseases, she protects the mankind with good health.

Her mantra is:

OM kAmeSwaryai vidmahe nityaklinnAyai dhlMahi tanno nityA prachodayaat.

Sri Bhagamalini

Sri Bhagamalini is beautiful and red, of smiling countenance, three-eyed, six-armed and seated on a lotus. She carries the night water lily, noose, and sugarcane bow in her left hands. In her right hands, she holds a lotus, goad and flowery arrows. She emits a crimson hue from her radiating body.

She gives her Sadhaka, the power to attract the three worlds. She also renders the strength required to win over enemies. In case of women, she protects the pregnant ladies for a safe delivery and prevents abortions and premature births. She grants fertility to couples.

Her mantra is:

OM bhagamaalinyai vidmahe sarvavasha~Nkaryai dhiimahi tanno nityaa prachodayaat.

Sri Nityaklinna

Sri Nityaklinna is red with red raiment and smeared with red sandal paste. Three eyes enhance the beauty of her eyes. On her forehead are beads of sweat shining like pearls. Above it is the half-moon. In her four hands, she holds noose, goad, drinking cup and the gesture of Abhaya. She is seated in the middle of a lotus, listless with desire. She is bedecked with ornaments studded with precious stones.

Couples who worship her will be very congenial. She fills love and affection in word and deed. Amba grants a feeling of unity in the family i.e. parents and their children

will show mutual love and affinity. He who attains her Siddhi is said to become more beautiful than Manmatha.

Her mantra is:

OM nityaklinnaayai vidmahe nityamadadravaayai dhiimahi tanno nityaa prachodayaat.

Sri Bherunda

Sri Bherunda has a body that shines as if made of molten gold. She has three eyes and her face is lit with a radiant smile. She is adorned with ornaments of celestial beauty, with earrings, necklace, armlets, waist-chain and rings on hands and feet. She carries the noose, goad, shield, sword, mace, thunderbolt and bow.

The very remembrance of her name frees one from the evil effects of the three kinds of poison: Sthavara (from trees and herbs), Jangama (from serpents and other animals) and Kritrima (artificially prepared). Chanting her mantra using a mala made of Abrus easily pleases her.

Her mantra is:

OM bherunDaayai vidmahe viShaharaayai dhiimahi tanno ntiyaa prachodayaat.

Sri Vahnivasini

Sri Vahnivasini shines with the beauty of early youth. She is lustrous like burning gold. Her lotus face with three eyes is lit by a gentle smile. She is eight-armed and dressed in yellow silk with ornaments made of ruby. Such is the strength of the rays of the rubies on her diadem that they make the surrounding region ruddy. Anklets and waist-chains of gems, pearls and other ornaments enhance her radiance. In her left hand she holds a red lotus, a conch, a bow of red sugarcane and full moon. In her right hand, she holds a white water lily, a golden horn, flowery arrows and a citron. She is surrounded by Shaktis on all sides.

A Sadhaka who obtains her Siddhi can by simple utterance of her mantra, subject the three worlds. Amba bestows physical radiance, renders all worldly attainments and makes one unparalleled in the three worlds.

Her mantra is:

OM vahnivaasinyai vidmahe siddhidaayinyai dhiimahi tanno nityaa prachodayaat.

Sri Vajreshwari

Sri Vajreshwari is seated at her ease on her Chakra consisting of a triangle, hexagon, lotuses and Mahapura, placed on a magnificent throne. This throne in turn is located on a golden boat flowing in an ocean of blood. She has four arms and three eyes. She is red, attired in red raiment, surrounded with red unguent and garlanded with red flowers. On her head is a diadem of lustrous rubies. In her hands, she carries noose, goad, sugarcane bow and arrows of pomegranate flowers.

She looks upon her Sadhaka with a cooling grace of mercy. She is the destructress of the dense Evils, boundless like the ocean. The Siddhi of her mantra grants freedom from Aviveka. On the physical plane, she destroys all evils and troubles faced by the Sadhaka.

Her mantra is:

OM mahaavajreshwaryai vidmahe vajranityaayai dhiimahi tanno nityaa prachodayaat.

Sri Shivaduti

Sri Shivaduti has eight arms and is bright like the midday sun in summer. She is garbed in red raiment and wears different kinds of ornaments on different parts of her body. There are the nine great gems in her diadem. Her face is filled with a gentle smile. She is surrounded by great Rishis who are busy singing her praise. In her left hands, she carries a horn, shield, mace and a cup made of gems. In her right hands, she holds sword, goad, axe and a lotus.

She is the destroyer of wickedness and is ever eager to grant the pleasing objects of desire to her Sadhakas and devotees. She annihilates injustice and unrighteousness. She fulfills all righteous desires – material and otherwise. She leads Sadhaka to the state of Shiva.

Her mantra is:

OM shivaduutyai vidmahe Shiva~Nkaryai dhiimahi tanno nityaa prachodayaat.

Sri Tvarita

Sri Tvarita is the quickest to grant fruit to her Sadhaka compared to any other goddess. She is of auspicious form in the first flush of youth and of dark complexion. She has three eyes and four hands and her beautiful lotus-like face smiles gently. She is clad in new leaves. She is adorned with eight fierce and great serpents. On her head is a crystal crown with a crest of peacock's feather. Her arms are adorned with bangles made of beautiful peacock's tail feathers. Strings of Gunja berries hang round her throat. Her breasts are smeared with red sandal paste. She holds in her four hands, noose, goad and Mudras of Vara and Abhaya. She is seated on a golden throne, surrounded by lions and bears.

She grants education, health, wealth, physical radiance and long life. She protects from poisonous attacks and poverty. Her Sadhaka becomes capable of even enchanting the celestial nymphs.

Her mantra is:

OM tvaritaayai vidmahe mahaanityaayai dhiimahi tanno nityaa prachodayaat.

Sri Kulasundari

Sri Kulasundari is propitious, supremely kind and blissful with twelve arms and six lotus-like faces which smile sweetly and with three eyes in each face. She is red, seated on a red lotus and is smeared with blood. Her raiment and ornaments are also red and is surrounded by Shaktis also red in color. Her crown is bright with priceless gems and rubies, earrings, neck-chains, armlets, waist-chains and anklets heighten her own brightness. On her beautiful breasts are clusters of red gems. In her are all the words of the Vedas. In her right hands, she carries a rosary of coral beads, a lotus, a Kamandalu, a drinking cup made of gems, full of wealth, a citron and Vyakhya Mudra. In her left hands are a book, red lotus, a golden pen, a garland of gems, a conch shell and vara Mudra. Devas and sages who sing her praises surround her.

She grants knowledge to her Sadhaka and makes him Sarvajna (all-knowing). She makes one equal to Hayagriva in scholarship. To obtain knowledge, wealth and annihilation of enemies, she should be respectively meditated upon as being crystal white, golden and smoky dark blue colors.

Her mantra is:

OM kulasundaryai vidmahe kaameshwaryai dhiimahi tanno nityaa prachodayaat.

Sri Nitya

Sri Nitya controls all moving bodies and by her, all Jivas dwell in their bodies. She is the Chaitanya in all. She is the deity who presides Dakini and the other Yoginis in the six Chakras in the body. Colored like the rising sun, she bears on her head a luminous crown. Her face is lit by a soft smile. She is dressed in red raiment and adorned with red rubies. She has three eyes and twelve hands. With her right hands, she carries the noose, white lotus, sugarcane bow, shield, trident and the Mudra of vara. She carries goad, book, flowery arrows, sword, skull and Abhaya Mudra in her left hand. Her Shaktis are countless and form a complete circle around her.

She grants Vaksiddhi to her Sadhaka by which he can give boons or curse others. He achieves khechari Siddhi by her grace. Besides she is also the granter of supreme physical strength.

Her mantra is:

OM nityaa bhairavyai vidmahe nityaa nityaayai dhiimahi tanno nityaa prachodayaat.

Sri Nilapataka

Sri Nilapataka is sapphire-blue in color with five faces and three-eyes in each, and ten hands. Her face is sweet and smiling. She is clad in red raiment and her hand is adorned with lustrous gems. She is decked mostly with pearls. Clusters of gems are on various parts of her body. In her left hands, she carries the goad, the banner, and shield, a bow made of horn and makes vara Mudra. In her right hands, she carries the goad, the Shakti weapon, sword, and arrows and makes Abhaya Mudra. She is seated on a lotus and surrounded by countless Shaktis resembling herself.

She grants victory in battle and success in trade. She also grants success in exams, interviews and court cases.

Her mantra is:

OM niilapataakaayai vidmahe mahaanityaayai dhiimahi tanno nityaa prachodayaat.

Sri Vijaya

Sri Vijaya Nitya has a body lustrous red like that of the rising sun. She has five smiling faces in each of which are three eyes and she has ten hands. Her raiment is yellow. She bears a brilliant crown and on her forehead a crescent moon. She is decked with all kinds of ornaments. In her left hands, she carries conch, noose, shield, bow and white lily. In her right hands, she carries Chakra, goad, arrows and a citron fruit. When she is invoked for the purpose of victory over an enemy, she is terrific in appearance but in daily meditation, she is conceived in a benignant aspect. She is seated on a lion and is surrounded by Shaktis seated on tigers.

A self-controlled Sadhaka who worships her in her Chakra becomes happy in every way. She also grants success in debates.

Her mantra is:

OM vijayaadevyai vidmahe mahaanityaayai dhiimahi tanno nityaa prachodayaat.

Sri Sarvamangala

Sri Sarvamangala is all-beneficent and grants khechari Siddhi to her Sadhaka. She is of golden complexion, decked with pearls and rubies and bears a ruby crown on her head. Her eyes, full of mercy, are the sun and the moon. She is seated on a lotus. She holds a citron in her right hand and with her left hand, grants wealth and desires to her devotees by vara Mudra. She is surrounded by Shaktis, countless in number, who resemble herself. She is also surrounded by the Surya, Chandra and Agni Kala Devis. Her Moola mantra undergoes 9216 variations. However, these secrets have to be learnt from a Guru.

She grants progress, both in the materialistic and spiritual worlds. She safeguards her devotees during journey.

Her mantra is:

*OM sarvama~Ngalaayai vidmahe chandraatmikaayai dhiimahi tanno nityaa
prachodayaat.*

Sri Jwalamalini

Sri Jwalamalini Devi is lustrous like flaming fire and resplendent with her ruby crown. She has six faces and twelve arms and is decked with all kinds of adornment. She holds in her hands, the noose, goad, sword, shield, bow, arrows, mace, tortoise, spear and fire. She also makes the gestures of vara and Abhaya. Her lotus-like faces, each of which has three eyes, are illumined by a sweet smile.

The Devi can be invoked in a boy and girl and can be made to answer relating to the past, present or future. Invoking her in sanctified water and consuming the same will rekindle the digestive fire. She also grants Vedha, Akarshana, Santapa, Vashya and Avesha Siddhis. She destroys all enemies and gives unheard financial gains.

Her mantra is:

*OM jwaalaamaalinyai vidmahe mahaajwaalaayai dhiimahi tanno nityaa
prachodayaat.*

Sri Chitra

Sri Chitra is lustrous like the rays of the rising sun, decked with jewels made of nine kinds of gems, which are also set in her crown. She has four arms and three eyes and is clothed with a wonderful silken garment of variegated color. A pure smile illumines her face. She is all-bliss and ever existent. She grants all desires. In her four arms, she holds the noose, the goad, vara and Abhaya Mudras.

Chitra grants wealth and self-knowledge (Atmalabha) to her Sadhaka. Her Sadhaka is able to subjugate others to his won way of thinking. She showers her devotee with sudden riches like treasure-troves, lottery etc.

Her mantra is:

OM vichitraayai vidmahe mahaanityaayai dhiimahi tanno nityaa prachodayaat.

Srividya Upasana Rahasyam

Shakta school holds Advaita as the ultimate reality in an equal perspective and of the same ideal as of the monastic Vedanta. This is evident from the sacred and mysterious monosyllable (Pranava) attributed to each thought and consisting of the corresponding seed-letters (Bijaksharas). The Pranava of Vedic thought is AUM. Correspondingly, the Shakta and Shaiva schools use 'Hrim' and 'Aham' respectively. Since all the Pranavas end in the Bindu, it is natural that the Bindu is the material cause for all the factors. It is the unconditional Brahman or the allpervading Supreme Truth from which emanate all the conditional entities. Paraa-Bindu is the immeasurable entity into which this entire manifestational phenomenon finds repose. This power of creation and absorption, quite inseparable from its holder Shiva, is called Shakti. The magnificence, grace and beauty of this primordial Power make up eternal bliss. In consequence, there is a latent agreement among all mankind and this truth must be the one we seek. Accordingly, religions in general are at one with each other. Each has a philosophy antagonistic to the special dogma of the other. The Vedic Rishis have already declared, "The Brahman is surely different from the known, and again, it is above the unknown – such was the utterance we heard of the ancient teachers who explained it to us" (Kena 1.4).

Shiva is the transcendent self, the divine power of conservation and Shakti is immanent, the divine energy of pulsation (Spanda). The appearance of both is like the two sides of the same coin. The Tantra declares, "His energies are evident in the multiform manifestation and the holder of the energies is Maheshwara – the Lord of the Lords, Paramashiva himself". The Upanishad says, "His (Paramashiva's) Parashakti is manifold, as described in the Veda, the natural energies of knowledge, power and action" (Swe Upa IV 10). These conjoint with the powers of concealing (Pidhaana) and favoring (Anugraha) of Shiva constitute the five-fold glory of Sri Parashakti.

This is further made clear by Kshemaraja in one of the benedictory verses in his commentary on Stavachintamani of Bhatta Narayana: "We bow to Shiva who, enjoining his fivefold glory, reveals the spiritual Shakti, the power of consciousness and bliss". Parashakti is therefore Yoni, the original source, the Supreme Mother whose five glories are Chit, Ananda, Iccha, Jnana and Kriya.

Paraabhaktaarika Mahatripurasundari is the goddess of Supreme Beauty and Wisdom who pervades the three functional aspects of manifestation. Ever splendid

in Her fivefold glory, She is here praised in gross form which she assumes according to the traditional contemplation of an earnest seeker as Tripura Bhairavi, while the ultimate truth remains openly concealed in Her Infinite Supreme Self. The visualization of Sridevi as Kriya Shakti – the predominating power of activity has close relevance to Mantroddhara Vidhi – the way of elevation through mantra. This approach of worship is made through Anavopaya, the light means in which even meditation is held to be a Kriya – physical or mental activity. It also uses Kriya in a gross form e.g. repetition of a mantra, worship of the deity, an idol etc. The mantra, being the body of Sridevi, describes the body by its power of inward intuition called Vimarsha Shakti. When the divine body is brought into the effective consciousness of the devotee, it is called Srividya. Its verbal expression is the Panchadashi Maha mantra and the visual expression of the same is Srichakra. They are all essentially identical. Mahatripurasundari is the wondrous delight of that consciousness which is supreme and unsurpassable, who is effulgent by its own light and who permeates the three states of life like oil (triShu chaturthaM tailavadaasechyaM - Shiva Sutra III-20). She is Parashakti, Paramashiva, Parabrahman, the supreme beatitude or ultimate reality to be realized by constant and vigorous practice of supreme yoga with Divine Grace. Therefore, sages express the Supreme Being in the Vedas by the pronoun 'That' (sa tatpadaarthaH paramaatmaa – Sarvasaaronpanishad). The Tantra says, "That Devi who resides in all creatures". Supreme consciousness is actually Shiva and Shakti, Prakasha and Vimarsha. Shiva and Shakti are two only by connotation; by denotation they are one and the same Reality. Prakasha or light is the illumination or knowledge as the nature of the Self. There is predominance of Shiva Bhava. Vimarsha is Spanda or Kriya. Its potentiality is called Shakti. Vimarsha literally means thinking or ideation. There is predominance of Shakti Bhava. There is no material activity. All activity is mental. Vimarsha consists in completely withdrawing oneself from all voluntary thinking. A spontaneous thinker (or doer) is, at the same time, a natural spectator of his mind. This leads to Sahaja Samadhi, undisturbed equipoise. Light and sound stand for revelation and consciousness respectively, or Shiva and Shakti.

The very form of Tripura refers to the primal energy Parashakti transcending the three divine deities – Kali, Lakshmi and Saraswati, who represent threefold manifestation. Parashakti is the divine power of the transcendent master Paramashiva, unconditionally inseparable from Her. Parashakti Tripura is the supreme consciousness that illumines the three states of waking, dream, sleep in the microcosm, and BhuH, Bhuvah, SvaH (Paraa, Paraaparaa and Aparaa) in the macrocosm. She is described as the luster of the supreme spirit, perceived at three spots in the body – forehead, head and heart, depicting Her powers of knowledge,

activity and volition experienced by the devotee during meditation or worship. Each of her three inherent powers (Jnana, Kriya and Iccha - paraasya shaktirividhaiva shruuyate swaabhaavikii j~naanabalakriyaa cha. – Sweta. Upanishad VI.8) is explained in its triple symbolism, namely:

1. Pooja Sanketa
2. Chakra Sanketa
3. Mantra Sanketa

According to Pooja Sanketa regarding the first Bija of Bala Tripurasundari Maha Vidya, the goddess Tripurasundari bears in the center of her forehead, splendor and power of knowledge. It refers to the knowledge of creativity or power of multiplicity of creation and is compared for the purposes of worship to the multihued bow of Indra. According to Chakra Sanketa, the forehead refers to Ajna Chakra, the place of concentration for the yogis. The first evident appearance of Parashakti is in the knowledge aspect. Manifestation, indeed, begins with sound. The unbeaten sound, Anahata nada, expresses itself first in the Vedas. Thence all kinds of knowledge takes the form of activity. The seat of knowledge, in an individual body also, is the forehead. Ordinarily, by the very first look on the forehead of a person, one can know about his or her mood, intention or tendency of behavior etc. since knowledge gives color to thought, the energy of knowledge expresses itself in multiplicity, both in an individual and in the universe. Its symbolic expression is illustrative of the multicolored bow of Indra, meaning the rainbow.

By way of Mantra Sanketa, the mystic Bija 'Aim' is revealed here. Primordial knowledge is expressed through the universal sound called Shabda Brahma. This sound gets thick and becomes audible through the three Vedas. The first mantra of Rig Veda begins with 'a' and the first mantra of Yajur Veda begins with 'i'. 'a' + 'i' = 'ae'. Again, the first mantra of Sama Veda begins with 'a'. Then 'ae' + 'a' gives 'ai' sound. The syllable 'ai' therefore represents the three Vedas. This connotes Existence-Knowledge-Bliss aspects of Brahman. To express the nondual Parabrahman is the final import of the Vedic triad. Bindu is added to the letter 'ai'. Thus Aim being the combination of the vowel letters from a to am, governs all multifarious sounds. Therefore, the non-dual Shakti of Shiva in Her knowledge aspect is represented in Aim mantra. It is the Saraswata Bija and the presiding deity is Saraswati, the goddess of learning or speech. The first appearance of speech being Pashyanti, concentration is focused in Ajna Chakra in the forehead.

The place of Kundalini, when active towards manifestation, is the pelvic plexus in the human body. It is named 'AdhaH Kundalini'. The three main nerves Ida, Pingala and Sushumna originate here. There it is termed Yukta Triveni. When Kundalini is awakened from the mystic slumber, it moves like lightening to reach Sahasrara where it becomes Urdhwa Kundalini and is termed Mukta Triveni. Kundalini is the yoni, the place of emanation of all kinds of energy. It is the subtler Kandarpa Vayu and not prana. She resides in the triangular space at the bottom of spine in the Moolaadhaara Chakra. The Sanskrit notation of the vowel 'Ai' resembles a triangle. Thus this Bija is full of the power points of will, knowledge and activity, with a predominance of knowledge aspect. With bindu above, it is the forceful Bija mantra, constant repetition of which, followed in a traditional way, awakens Kundalini.

According to Pooja Sanketa regarding the second Bija of Bala Maha Vidya, Goddess spreads from the head, clean and white luster of the energy of activity on all sides like the moon. She is worshipped as the universal mother of peace and love. According to Chakra Sanketa, the head refers to the seat wherefrom the power of activity works. Knowledge has its source in thought and this knowledge along with thought becomes the cause of activity. Jnana Shakti is predominated by Kriya Shakti. Clear and white luster of the moon is symbolic of the pure intellect in Sahasrara, wherefrom activity is executed in the balanced and fruitful way. Therefore, the place of luster in a person is the head. Activity takes place only when it is conceived in the brain. It elevates knowledge, making it concrete, which is a successful means of sincere Sadhana towards emancipation. According to Mantra Sanketa, the seed mantra 'Klim' is revealed. Knowledge of the supreme spirit manifests in the inarticulate sound called Shabda Brahman. It is indistinct Anahata. The vowels a to am denote this sound. When the consonants ka to la combine with the vowels, distinct or articulate sound is produced. Therefore 'kla' stands for creation coming to the state of preservation, where knowledge assembles for activity. 'i' stands for clear conception which is only a transformation of the power of perception. Bindu connotes non-dual Parashakti in the universal manifestation. It is the state where there is no assumption. It is the junction where there is fulfillment of all desires (Kamakoti). It is the state of soothing luster. This Bija is called Kamaraja Bija. The deity of this Bija is Mahalakshmi or Lalita, who is evident in two forms. As Kali, she is malign and works fear and panic in the heart of the timid and the unwary. As Lakshmi, she is benign and acts as a foster mother to the knowing and the tenacious. Thus, Klim stands for the Kriya Shakti aspect of the supreme Parashakti. It is the second stage of speech known as Madhyama. Its place of pronunciation is in

the head. The vowels help the consonants to produce articulate sound when ideas begin to take the form of words.

The place for Iccha Shakti or the power of will or volition is the heart. According to Pooja Sanketa regarding the third Bija of Tripura Vidya, Mahatripurasundari, in her aspect as Iccha Shakti, is eternally established in the heart like the glory of the sun.

In the field of Chakra Sanketa, the power of volition refers to Anahata Chakra. It is the ever-aware will that pervades the powers of knowledge and activity. The center remains ever fresh just as day is bright with sunlight and wards off all evil in its presence. When knowledge predominates over activity, it leads back towards release, the final beatitude of life. Then the power of thought Iccha Shakti, is at work. The place of this power is the heart, the center of involution and absorption.

The heart symbolizes complete comprehension when all trash (Samskara) gets burnt as we see that all filth is destroyed when the sun shines bright. The power of thought predominating over the other powers of knowledge and action thus works towards serenity, which leads to the realization of universal oneness, called Supreme state of Consciousness. The presiding deity of this power is Gauri, rightly called Mahatripurasundari. Her glory is described, for the common man, as that of the sun, and as worthy of attainment. The awareness is ever alive in the heart of an earnest devotee of the divine mother.

According to Mantra Sanketa, the mystic letter 'Sauh' is revealed. The mantra Sauh is explained in the light of Iccha Shakti. This power is also called Visarga Shakti, the energy of release. Visarga connotes pouring of ambrosia or the final beatitude. The trichotomy of the world phenomena (maata, meya and maana) is absorbed into oneness or the sameness – Sattaa Saamaanya Avasthaa (as explained in Yoga Vasishta), just as sun's blaze reduces all inflammable objects to ashes. Then all duality disappears. The glory of the blissful sun of spirituality pervades the manifest and unmanifest universe. The seat of this Bija is the heart. Analysis of the mantra is: 'sa' means 'with', 'ou' stands for determination and Visarga for release. Thus "With determination, this Bija brings about release from all bondages" is what the mantra means. This Bija is also called Paraa Bija (especially by Trika tradition). On its accomplishment, Mahatripurasundari reveals the supreme reality as herself and as Sadhaka's own self. Also, 'Sa' represents Jiva constituting of 31 Tatvas from Prithvi upto Maya. 'Au' stands for Suddha Vidya, Sadashiva, and Ishwara Tatvas as also the Iccha, Jnana, Kriya Shaktis of Tripura Bhairavi. This is represented by Shoola Bija,

which is aptly adopted by Shaiva Tantra rather than Srividya. Hence I omit discussion of this Trishula concept.

Visarga represents the display of powers by Shakti inherent in Shiva. It is the level where an advanced aspirant feels an influx of an internal delight owing to the awakening of the Kundalini. It is rightly called Kshobhaatmaka Visarga, the process of flow of the five cognitive energies that swell up out of sheer delight. There is no physical sexual contact at all though this is the orgasm of the real Brahma Maithuna. This is also called Jnana Mudra. This Bija is also referred to as Bhairaveeya hridaya or Bhairava's heart in Paraatrimshikaa. By chanting this mantra with concentration, volition turns into determination for release from the bonds of the world and attainment of the final beatitude. This mantra is also called Vaadava mantra since it burns all action through knowledge to find repose in the supreme self.

In the order of manifestation or srishti Krama, it is the state of Vaikhari, the spoken word of spontaneous delight. Impurity (Mala) accumulates because of ignorance of one's real nature. Therefore, bondage of the individual is due to his innate ignorance. It is primary limiting condition (Apurnatva) brought about through Aanavamala (apuurNatvamaaNavam) from the universal consciousness to limited individuality, Anutva. Iccha Shakti of the Supreme comes to limitation. Aanavamala is of two kinds:

1. Paurusha Ajnana – ignorance innate in the very being of the individual self.
2. Bauddha Ajnana – ignorance inherent in the intellect.

This impurity makes the Jiva consider himself to be a separate entity, cut off from the universal stream of consciousness. This is the subtlest impurity. There are two other impurities of subtle and gross nature. Mayiya Mala and Karma Mala make the Jiva further limited when he comes in association with Ashuddhaadhwa, the impure path.

Mayiya Mala brings about the consciousness of difference (bhinnavedyaprathaatvaM maayiiyam), because of the differing limiting adjuncts of the body etc. This comes about when Jnana Shakti of the Supreme comes to limitation. Then further limitation is brought about by Vaasanas (shubhaashubhavaasanaamayatvaM kaarmaam), the residual traces of actions done in previous births under the influence of desire. This is Karma Mala (mala means impurity). All the impurities must get washed off before identity with the Supreme

Self is realized. We who are all troubled by birth and death and have various kinds of attachments, should pray for the destruction of our sins so that the supreme Self is realized. In a moment of grace – Soon after the ignorance gets destroyed, effulgent glory of atman is revealed in a flash (sakR^idvibhaato.ayamaatmaa - Chandogya Upanishad 8.4.2). Soon after taking to meditation on Mahatripurasundari that grace comes in a sudden surprise and is also a spontaneous event. The substrate of the universe in all its phases comprises the three divine mystic forms appearing when uniformity of the three basic Gunas or qualities gets shuffled. The Divine Mother is then manifest in everything in triple form. Literally Tripura means 'Puraa tri', she who is prior to the three Supreme powers. She is the fourth, the incomprehensible, unperceivable, and formless, fine and beyond what we can best think of. Therefore, it is the mystic triad. Sruti confirms it by saying, "who can know the knower".

With the realization of the powers of knowledge, activity and volition according to Chakra Sanketa and by chanting constantly the great Mantra with perfect concentration at the forehead, the head and the heart according to the Mantra Sanketa, Mahatripurasundari, who is Being and Becoming or Prakasha and Vimarsha both in one, reveals Herself in a moment of grace mysteriously. Chanting of the formula with concentration in the indicated places, is undertaken by an earnest aspirant in accordance with Tantra tradition under the direction of a competent preceptor as given in Mantroddhara Vidhi (mantroddhaaravidhirvisheShasahitaa satsampradaayaanvitaH). Sridevi grants the boon of release from the dualistic sense of the world. it is an experience of oneness in all the trichotomic nature of manifestation. Authority, evidence and theorem – all the items of duality, get merged in that realm of Parabrahman Paramashiva, which is eternal existence and Supreme beauty. This happens by the grace of Sridevi only.

Shiva, one's own essential Self, is recognized by means of Shakti (shaiviimukhamihochyate - Vijnanabhairava 20). In the train of alphabet (Matrika), the letters ya, ra, la, va are called Antastha. These letters adopt the sound just like the vowels and connote refinement in the fulfillment of Sadhana. This further develops into eagerness as suggested by the Ushma letters Sa, s^a, sa, ha. Ushma means heat or eagerness as these are pronounced with greater force. Ha is the last letter. It connotes certainty. A stands for Shiva and ha stands for Shakti. The two letters combined and with Bindu connote perfect awareness of Parashakti or Parabrahman. Therefore 'Aham Brahmasmi, Shivoham, Aham Brahmaswaroopini – these great sentences from the Vedas (Mahavakya) point to the same reality which is ultimate and supreme. The first sprouting seed of Paraa is Pashyanti. While abiding in Her own glory of Sadashiva Tatva, She begins to spread forth through the

power of knowledge. She is very subtle and lovingly bright like the tender stalks of sprouting Trapusi fern. This is represented by the seed-letter Aim. Trapusi is a kind of fern whose first sprout is as tender, delicate and beautiful as the super-fine rising Kundalini. Unani physicians for treating certain diseases use this herb. It grows commonly in Kashmir. Kundalini here refers to Urdhwa Kundalini. The reference is also to prana Kundalini that works at the physical level. It expresses itself in the form of life in the body. It is only partially awake, just for maintaining normal life in the body. When it is awakened, the body throbs with radiant life, which is evident in the Yogi's forehead. The more it is awakened, the more youthful energy the yogi exhibits in the body. Men, who know this secret, do not fall again into the cycle of birth and death.

Kundalini Jnana is available to earnest seekers whereas, Kundalini Vijnana is available to a chosen few. Hence it is called a secret. Bhoga (enjoyment) is the fruit of Moksha (liberation). Only Jivanmuktas are seen, as described in the scriptures, enjoying the fruit of liberation. But that state is obtained with great difficulty. Constant and rigid Sadhana followed through a number of births is not enough without the grace of Sri Paraabhataarika.

Sometimes Her grace comes in a sudden surprise. Great teachers have experienced such occasions. Grace may come when a balance is struck between the actions of the previous births and those of the present i.e. when Karmasaamyā occurs. Grace glorifies even those who ordinarily appear least fit for it. It is a mystery. It signifies the will of the Supreme power alone. That is why it is sometimes amazingly sudden. Grace of Sri Mahatripurasundari is unconditional. No human effort can bring it into play (natvatrako. api aatmiiyo puruShaakaaraH nirvahita – Ishwara Pratyabhijnā Vritti VI.7). Bindu means the dot or what is called the Anusvara, added to a letter on its top to give a nasal sound. Ordinarily, if a mantra is pronounced without the Bindu, it becomes incorrect and so loses efficacy. The Bindu pronounced at the end of the seed-letters denotes the Supreme non-dual Parabrahman. Mantra Japa as explained in the Sadhana texts, is absolutely necessary to invoke the powers of the Goddess, and when it is performed with the purport of the mantra, it becomes a sure vehicle to the Divine Presence. But here is an extra-ordinary example of the grace of Sri Parashakti.

Utathya, a Brahmin boy was born a dunce. He had been a failure in receiving education or any kind of knowledge. He could neither speak nor associate himself with people. He knew neither Sadhana nor any mantra of the Goddess. He only led a pious life on the bank of the Ganges with a vow that he would always speak the

truth. This gave him the name Satyavrata. He had chosen to pass his days in the forest alone after it was difficult for him to hear the taunts and face the affliction inflicted on him by his disappointed parents. One day while he was sitting outside his hut and repenting over his lot, a hog, stricken with arrows of a hunter, passed by suddenly. Fears stricken himself, in a sudden shock, he uttered ai ai. Trembling with fear, the animal hid itself in the bushy forest behind the hermit's hut. Immediately, the hunter came there and requested the hermit and requested the hermit to tell him which way the hog had hidden itself. It was a puzzling situation for the young man. On one hand the hunter pleaded for his professional activity and duty towards the family dependent on him, and on the other hand the hermit's own heart was overfilled with compassion. For some moments he could say nothing. Soon he thought to himself: 'what involves violence is not called truth. Even untruth spoken in the excess of compassion is the real truth. What is useful and helpful for the human beings constitutes truth and nothing else'.

**satyaM na satyaM khalu yatra hiMsaa dayaanvitaM chaanR^itameva satyam |
hitaM naraaNaaM bhavatiha yena tadeva satyaM na tathaanyathaiva ||
[Devi Bhagavata 3.11.36]**

As mentioned earlier, he had no initiation of a divine mantra and he did not know the great seed-letter of Mahatripurasundari. Simply, out of some divine urge, he had pronounced the mantra ai ai without pronouncing the Bindu. Yet the grace of the Divine Mother descended on him undesired.

Ashtavakra Gita says: 'Fire gives burns even if touched unknowingly' (anicChayaa.apisamspR^iShTo dahatyeva cha paavakaH XVIII.37). And as a result, words of wisdom flowed from his mouth. He said, "O hunter! Why do you ask me about this again and again just to suit your end? The fact is that the eyes endowed with sight have no tongue to speak, and the tongue which could speak does not see at all" (Devi Bhagavata 3.11.36). Even the dunce spoke wisdom on being graced by the Divine Mother. Rare indeed is that great-souled one who is not desirous of either enjoyment or liberation.

The goddess is also called Nityaa (eternal) because she is not held by the course of time- past, present and future. The Supreme Consciousness, even while projecting as authority, evidence and theorem (pramaataa pramaaNa prameyaruupaa sR^iShTiH), is not affected in any way. In reality, consciousness is neither the object of eternity nor of non-eternity as Utpala maintains: 'neither always nor then nor once, where no such notion of time exists, that is Thy realization. This cannot be

termed as eternal or otherwise –Shivasutras'. Divine grace descends on anyone of the thousands of men in a sudden surprise and out of the free will of Parashakti. It is unconditional and so unattainable with any human effort whatsoever (Abhinavagupta – Ishwara Pratyabhijna). It comes as an intense moment of Shaktipata, complete prostration of human strength or little ego. It descended on Satyavrata Brahmana in an intense moment of fear and repentance. When we say 'klim' without counts, it means 'im' without ka and la. Since action is essentially an offshoot of knowledge, this mantra 'im' includes the mantra 'Aim', in the field of Mantra Sanketa. Aum or Pranava is the established symbol for the recognition of familiarity with the Divine Self. That gives Pranava, the spirit of obeisance. With the same faith, the wise pronounce this Bija mantra Klim bereft of ka and la. Ka and la constitute the manifestation from Kaala to Prithvi. Aum is pronounced with faith and devotion at every ritualistic performance as is also ordained by the Shastras. No ritual is complete without the chanting of Aum. Chanting of Pranava is done in all sacred moments. For the Sadhaka, these sacred moments are the junctions of outgoing and incoming breath, or the special times of Vishuvat and Abhijit Kaalas, the time of Shaktipata when the Divine gets revealed. Fixed mind is essentially possible when complete surrender is made to the supreme ruler of the universe. Patanjali puts it as: "Concentration may get fixed through devotion to Ishwara" (IishwarapraNidhaanaadvaa - Yoga Sutra 1.23). Devotion is, however a subtle and dangerous path, beset with the pitfalls of ambition and pride. Devotion to a personal God brings with it a natural inclination to service and surrender of ego. Our minds can recognize the attributes of a God with form. Ishwara, the supreme controller is, therefore, all that we can know of the Reality until we pass beyond Prakriti. When the glory of the Goddess of knowledge, combined with powers of activity and will, is revealed, the devotee experiences tranquility, peace and perfection of eternal beatitude. When divinity gets revealed to the wise, it is expressed in the words of wisdom, or poetry, conveying the subtleties of divine glory. The great mantra consisting of the three seed-letters is for the practice of Nirguna Samadhi chiefly though. As such the conclusive form of the mantra becomes 'Aim Im AuH', which gives perfection in spiritual Sadhana, signifying that the knowledge that predominates over activity and volition, alone can bring about the divine union (j~naanaadeva tu kaivalyam). When speaking of Yoga, what is meant is that concentration, meditation, Japa and other practices followed as routine exercises are no condition for the exalted spiritual perfection (Shiva sutra 1-1).

Whosoever among mortals, following whatsoever disciplines and having whatever desire, reflects on or repeats each of The seed-formula in parts or otherwise as:

1. **With consonants** – aim kilm sauh
2. **Without consonants** – ai I au
3. **Combined** – aimklimsauh
4. **Separate** – aim, klim or sauh
5. **In order** – Aim-klim-sauh or ai-I-au
6. **Reverse order** -sauh-klim-aim or au-ai - is granted the fruit thereof in no time.

Sridevi is called the joy of projection. Shakti, being Shiva's inseparable energy, is the joy of projection as the universe. Chit Shakti unfolds the universe upon her own screen by the power of her own free will (swecChayaa swabhittau vishwamunmiilayati). Like mother, therefore, she is ever full of joy and fulfills every desire of her devotee, whoever he is and by whatever means he approaches her. Among the prescribed methods of approaching the Divine, some of the chief ones, suggested in the Agamas are:

1. Following the step of the assignments of limbs (Anga and Kara Nyasa) and the Rishi.
2. Remembering the sacred sandals (Sri Guru Paadukaa) of the spiritual preceptor.
3. By following a method that comes unsought.

These three methods broadly suggest the Aanavopaaya, Shaaktopaaya and Shaambhavopaaya respectively.

The natural state of condition (Swaroopa) of Paraabhattachaarikaa Mahatripurasundari, as described in the Agamas, is of three kinds:

1. Sakala
2. Nishkala

3. Nishkalasakala

The divine mother is Parashakti, who holds the universe completely in Her self-effulgence (amba te paaripuurNyaM swaatmasphurattayaa vishwaM paraamR^ishatiityambaa). She is the sovereign power of her own free will. She is procreatrix, the mother of the entire creation. Some of her names that associate her to the first form of Bala are: Sarada (the giver of essence), Vagishwari (the supreme deity of speech or knowledge), Mahavidya (the knowledge supreme), Brahmi (the consort and power of Brahma). Saraswati literally means 'the flowing one' and represents speech, which in perfection, pre-supposes power of knowledge and intelligence. Since knowledge is the antithesis of the darkness of duality and ignorance, Sridevi is considered the personification of all knowledge – arts, sciences, crafts, skills etc. As the goddess of learning, therefore, she is shown holding a book in her left hand. The book represents all areas of secular sciences. The sign of fearlessness that Amba sports, stands for the assurance of devotee's faith and strength of will in the endeavor. The great fear arises from the accumulation of the three impurities or Malas. Amba also holds an Akshamala. The Shabda Brahman represents the essence of all alphabetical sounds. The rosary of letters from 'a' to 'ksha' is called Akshamala. It is also called Matrika Chakra. The practical use of this Matrika Mala for Japa and Sadhana is detailed in Kali Tantra and Srikularnava.

Shaktipata is the focal point of Divine Grace, when complete prostration of human strength takes place or when the little and subtle ego totally gets merged in the Supreme Self or Paraa Samvit. No human efforts can bring it to oneself. It comes in a flash when the Supreme only wills it. It comes out of her free will and therefore is unconditional. There are nine kinds of Shaktipata explained in Tantraloka. Parashakti is generous and sympathetic in granting boons to her devotees. In fact the four arms show her unimpeded power in all directions. But the hand that is raised for giving boons is softer because that grants complete realization of Supreme consciousness (i.e. of Paramashiva).

The experience of Supreme Bliss consists in the union of the soul and self through Supreme Power called Shakti. This marks the accomplishment of the power of 'SauH' Bija mantra, which is fed by the mantra 'Klim'. This is the fruit of successful concentration on the second form serially based on the first. This is the fulfillment of the power of desire, which has developed from the power of action including its preceding power of knowledge. This state is realized in their practice by those who are Mantra Siddhas, who have completed their practice with the accomplishment of mantras and not by those who are busy in their routine performances alone. It is

said, "Escaping from fixing the mind in abstract contemplation on the true nature of spirit, who think of different deities are like those who go about begging even on possessing abundant wealth and after begging, they still remain hungry" [Matrikabhedha Tantra]. One pointed meditation is done by abstraction of the senses (Pratyahara) through regulation of breath (Pranayama). Success in contemplation even for a moment, in this way, brings automatic satisfaction and divine joy.

Sri Ahstavakra Rishi said to his disciple, king Janaka: "Seeing the desire less lion (man), those elephants of sense-objects, quietly take to their heels, or if unable to run away, serve him like flatterers" (nirvaasanaM hariM dR^iShTvaa tuuShNiiM viShayadantinaH . palaayante na shaktaaste sevante kR^itachaaTavaH .. – XVIII). Abhinavagupta endorses the experience with a similar statement in his commentary on the Gita while explaining the verse sixty-three of chapter XVIII – "Therefore, seek refuge in Him alone with all your heart' is the sole and sure means of control over senses. The great master Utpaladeva, in his direct expression to Lord Shiva puts a self-explained question: "Right from the mind, all movements of the senses are entirely fickle. But, how they become firmly steady on realizing Thy supreme Self, O Lord, for those who are quite warm with the wealth of love (for you)? It is really wonderful". To those (to the earnest devotees), lovely women, whose eyes are charming like those of fawns (attractive objects of enjoyment in the evanescent world), helpless and bashful with the feverish attacks of the cupid (which, out of strong emotion and desire make one helpless and weak), become capable of being subdued (come to be under control).

The Shastra says that those who get established in one-pointed devotion to Amba's non-dual form even for a short time, meditate on her form, adored with bright gold earrings, bracelets and waist-band round her waist, their organic operations (Indriya Vritti), get spontaneously transformed into universal consciousness, the restless activity of the ears of their bodies becomes subtle just as the restless movement of the ears of an elephant stops of its own on its getting intoxicated. Earrings connote the Bija mantra 'Aim'. These stand for the power of knowledge of the deity. Ordinarily, earrings give the knowledge of a woman present at the time. Bracelets connote the mantra 'Klim'. These stand for the power of activity of the deity. Waistband connotes the mantra 'Sauh'. It stands for the power of volition – the fulfillment of desire.

The Shastras describe an alternate form of meditation: "O Goddess of light and luster! For realization of Thy Supreme Self, devotees, while offering heroic worship, meditate on Thy form, constituting Thy locks which are bedecked with the crescent

moon, a necklace of skulls round thy neck and garment red as Bandhuka flower. Thou art seated in a heroic pose (Virasana) on the sleeping Shiva. Thou hast four arms, three eyes, large and projected breasts and bending waist having three deep folds of beauty". In this extraordinary description of Sri Mahatripurasundari, the necklace of skulls depicts a garland of ego less alphabets. The red garment connotes creational will. Sri Mahatripurasundari, in Her full blossom of transcendence is referred to as the basic power of Light and Lustre, which in Tantra depicts Prakasha and Vimarsha. Prakasha, according to the Sruti, is that Brahman itself that is effulgent and shines variously (tameva bhaantamanubhaati sarvam – Katha Upanishad II.ii.15). Vimarsha conveys that 'through the various kinds of effulgence in the effects, it is known that the characteristic of luminosity is intrinsic to the Brahman' - tasya bhaasaa sarvamidaM vibhaati.

According to the Agamas, consciousness (Samvit, chit or Paramashiva as it is understood) is knowledge (Jnana) and activity (Kriya) both in one. Therefore, Jnana and Kriya, Shiva and Shakti, Prakasha and Vimarsha, are one. The whole relity is Shiva and the whole of it is Shakti as well. The goddess is hence addressed here as the goddess of both light and luster. A close examination of the Srividya mantra reveals that the mantra is Shiva-Shaktyatmaka. There is no separate need to chant a mantra of Paramashiva KAmeswara since Srividya itself is of the form of Shiva and Shakti. Its existence is even beyond the Sadashiva or the Ardhanariswara state.

Shakti is the power of Shiva. Her activity at will towards manifestation becomes evident while Shiva, the source of all power remains in volute. As such, the Eternal Shakti emanates as form and assumes different phases while the Eternal Shiva remains in the subtle state of Chaitanya. This is depicted in the Shakta lore as Shiva lying as if dead and Shakti stands on him in full vigor of awareness. The sleeping Sadashiva forms the berth of the palanquin in which Sri Mahatripurasundari is borne by the four powerful deities: Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra and Ishwara. Her four arms represent the powers of four prominent parts (Kalaa) of the creative divinity. They are: Nivritti, Pratishtaa, Vidya and Shantaa. Her three eyes connote the three luminary powers i.e. the sun, the moon and the fire, which correspond to knowledge (Pramaana), object of knowledge (Prameya) and empirical experient (Pramaata). Her breasts connote the meaning of alert awareness of light and sound or Prakasha and Vimarsha. Her bending waist is the sign of inclination towards manifestation. Decoding this symbolism, we obtain the nine enclosures of the Srichakra. We shall see them one by one.

1. **valiitrayaa~Nkitatanum** – Moolaadhaara Chakra – Bhoopura Trailokyamohana Chakra.
2. **madhye nimna** – Swadhishtana Chakra – Sodasha dala Padma - Sarvashaparipooraka Chakra.
3. **aapiinottu~Ngastaniim** – Manipooraka Chakra – Ashtadala Padma Sarvasamkshobhana Chakra.
4. **trinayanaam** – Anahata Chakra - Chaturdashara Sarvasaubhagyadayaka Chakra.
5. **chaturbhujaam** – Visuddhi Chakra – Bahirdasara Sarvarthasadhaka Chakra.
6. **pretaasanaadhyaasiniim** – Ajna Chakra – Antardashara Sarvarakshakara Chakra.
7. **bandhuukaprasavaaruNaambaradharaam** – Manasa Chakra - Ashtara Sarvarogahara Chakra.
8. **nR^imuNDasrajam** – Soma Chakra – Trikona sarvasiddhiprada Chakra.
9. **shashikhaNDamaNDitajaTaajuuTaam** – Sahasrara - Bindu Sarvanandamaya Chakra.

Note: This is the Samhara Krama accepted by Dakshinamurthy sampradaaya. Hayagriva tradition and Anandabhairava traditions omit triple girdle from Sri Chakra.

Shaktipata is unconditional – Sri Samvidamba is always graceful towards her earnest devotees, no matter whether they possess worldly grandeur or not. In contrast to the above, there are little chances of receiving grace by those, who are not devoted to the lotus of Sri Lalita Mahatripurasundari. People engrossed in ignorance, only suffer pains and pleasures of this transient world. They find no time to look back to the infinite self, wherefrom all this manifestation emanates. They remain devoid of knowledge of the goddess and so have no devotion. Undergoing penances for purification of the internal organs (AntaHkaraNa) promises a clear understanding of the truth. A devotee, by her grace, becomes HER. Much discussion of Tripura, the splendid name of Sridevi has already been done. The three worlds (of which she is the supreme queen) refer in the microcosm to BhuH, BhuvaH and SvaH (earth,

space and heaven) or to Vishwa, Praajna and Taijasa or Virat, Hiranyagarbha and Ishwara in terms of Vedanta. Sridevi is the supreme ruler of these and hence she is Turiya, the incomprehensible fourth. There are basically only three castes, as there are the three Vedas, the three Gunas etc. The three castes represent the three qualities viz. Satva, rajas and Tamas, as suggested by the pot offerings made by devotees who are quite established in their respective modes of worship. It may also be consistent with the teaching of the Gita that the first three kinds of devotees are the distressed, the seeker of knowledge and the seeker of wealth. By the fourth kind of devotee we mean the one, who is a Jnani or a Jivanmukta who, while living in the body is steady in the knowledge of the Self. His offering to Sridevi is his spiritual ecstasy, the divine inebriety of constant awareness of the supreme Self in contrast with the common wine that has its effect otherwise.

A Brahmana should offer Tarpana only with milk and sugar during Navavarana Pooja. Using other articles is banned by the Agamas. Ghee and honey are prescribed for the other two castes. These may not necessarily mean castes, but instead may refer to different stages of spiritual advancement. Well, more information on this may be obtained in a work called 'Srividya Sudhodaya', a classic by Deepakanatha Siddha. This also finds sanction in the Shubhagama Panchaka. As mentioned earlier, milk, ghee and honey represent Satva, rajas and Tamas in the devotees belonging to different levels of consciousness. In offering oblations or doing any kind of worship to the Divine Mother, one must not involve oneself in the desire of a return or fruit thereof. If one does, the earnestness and one-pointedness required for its success lose their intensity. Every seed that is sown bears its fruit against an action. Our efforts directed towards the efficient completion of work fall short and we cannot enjoy the fruit even when it's ripe. That makes a big loss. Still bigger loss occurs if we are impatient for the fruit of an action being performed at the present. We shall be deprived of undertaking more work for more prosperity. Hence the formula given by Bhagavan to Arjuna- Nishkama Karma (doing action without thinking of fruit thereof), must be followed. That certainly gives purity of mind. That gives heroic magnanimity and leads to ultimate freedom of soul, and the aim of true worship. The Tantra says:

**puujaa naama na puShpaadyairyaH matiH kriyate dR^idhaa |
nirvikalpe mahaavyomni saa puujaa hyaadaraallayaH ||**

'Worship does not mean merely offering of flowers etc. It rather consists in setting one's heart on that highest ether of consciousness, which is above all thoughtconstructs. It is dissolution of individuality with perfect ardor'.

The desire in a stable mind – that can defy Prarabdha, cannot be an ordinary one of attaining evanescent enjoyments. It is the desire for attaining perfection or recognizing one's true self, which may include accomplishments to rid oneself of bondage. That desire is for the upliftment of the soul and the whole world. And, one of pure intellect can only have it. The Upanishad says:

**yaM yaM lokaM manasaa saMvibhaati vishuddhasatvaH kaamayate yaaMshcha
kaamaan |
taM taM lokaM jaayate taaMshcha kaamaan ||**

‘The man of pure mind wins that world, which he mentally wishes for and those enjoyable things which he desires – Mundaka – III-1-30’.

The entire universe consists of subjective (Shabda) and objective (Artha) aspects blossoms from the Matrika Shakti. This is a proliferation of Paraa Vaak in six paths or courses known as Sadhadhwa. Three of these are under the indicated side (Vaachya) and the other three are under the indicator side (Vaachaka). The triad on the Vaachaka side is known as Kaladhwa (temporal order) and the triad on Vaachya side is known as Deshaadhwa (spatial order). The three Adhwas of each group correspond to the emanation of Pashyanti, Madhyama and Vaikhari stages from Paraa, the Supreme Divine energy. Corresponding to the five categories of pure creation, there are five stages of the emanation of sound.

The first is Para, which is supreme and subtle. The second is Pashyanti, which is less subtle but still undifferentiated. The third is Madhyama, which is grosser and differentiated, but not yet articulate. Articulate sound is called Vaikhari, which is of two forms, subtle and gross. It is from Vaikhari that all letters or Varnas and syllables or Padas and Sentences or Vakyas are manifested. Para, which resides in the Shiva Tatva, represents the first movement of Shabda. This is also called Nada Tatva. Pashyanti stands for Shakti Tatva and is also called Bindu Tatva. These are the compliments of the ultimate potency of creation. From these arise what is known as the Tribindu, which is the root of all mantras. The subtle and esoteric aspect of Kamakala has to be learnt from a competent Desika. Thus the duality that manifests in every Jiva is lost when the Supreme Mother reveals herself within luminous effulgence and everything in the world and within each one of us, becomes the mantra Shakti. The breathing in and out becomes cancels out and the mind and senses turn inward. One loses body consciousness and the feeling of duality ceases

and brings about the awareness of equality. Then one experiences complete identification with the Shiva – Shakti one Parabrahman as Mahatripurasundari.

Sadhadhwa with the corresponding names in three levels is as below:

**VACHAKADHWA (SHABDA) -> VACHYADHWA (ARTHA) -> CORRESPONDING
NAMES IN THE THREE LEVELS**

Varnadhwa (the path of letters or the divine alphabet) -> **Kalaadhwa** [consists of five boundaries of Tatvas – **Shantyatita Kalaa (Shiva Tatva)**, **Shanta Kalaa (Shakti to Shuddha Vidya)**, **Vidya Kalaa (Maya to Purusha)**, **Pratishta Kalaa (Prakriti to Jala)** and **Nivritti Kalaa (Prithvi)**] -> **Paraa and Pashyanti**.

Padaadhwa (consists of words and syllables) -> **Tatvaadhwa** (the complete system of thirty-six Tatvas) -> **Paraapara or Madhyama**.

Mantraadhwa (consists of mantras or great sentences) -> **Bhuvanaadhwa** (the combination of 118 worlds, according to Tantra tradition) -> **Aparaa** or the gross **Vaikhari**.

At the level of Paraa Vaak, Shabda and Artha or word and meaning are in a state of indistinguishable unity. These begin to differentiate when manifestation takes place. In this creative descent, there is polarity of subject and object, developing as the highest (Paraa) and the gross (Vaikhari). It is to be noted that Shadadhwa is meant for the process of dissolution to the state of Parashakti or Paraa, for the purpose of realizing the goddess through Her grace, and not for treading, for that leads to duality Samsara). Sridevi clearly explains this while in conversation with Sri Bhairava as:

**na hi varNavibhedena dehabhedena vaa bhavet |
paratvaM niShkalatvena sakalatvena tadbhavet ||**

Many authorities against the Vedic system of Varnashrama quote this verse. However, this refers to something totally different. 'Transcendence, the state of Paraa, cannot be consistent with the division of Kaladhwa or of Deshadhwa; it consists in its indivisibility. It cannot co-exist with Sakala or composite parts'. This is what the verse actually means. Therefore, by reducing the many (Kaladhwa or

Purusha and Deshadhwa or Shakti) to one transcendent (Parashakti or Parabrahman), one will be surely liberated from bondage.

In Traipura Siddhanta, Primal Energy is trichotomized in individual manifestation (Vibhaava), universal manifestation (Prabhaava) and confession (Anubhaava), each of which is again three-fold in nature. Tripura is the primal energy or Parashakti who excels the trichotomy. Some of the three triads, which are transcended by Sri Tripura, are:

The three Gods:

Brahma – Vishnu – Rudra or

Agni – Vayu – Surya or

Vasu – Rudra – Aditya

The three fires:

Ahvaniyagni - sacrificial fire

Garhapatyagni - household fire and

Dakshinagni - crematory fire

These three fires, important in the life of a person from birth to death, indicate the play of Sridevi in one's entire life. In Yogic parlance these three refer respectively to heart, forehead and Head.

The three powers:

Ichha - volition

Jnana - Knowledge and

Kriya - activity

These are indeed Brahmi, Vaishnavi and Raudri Shaktis. These three are the important powers of Sridevi to bring about the whole manifestation of the universe. All the three powers are active in everything and every atom of all beings.

The three vowel sounds:

Udaata – Anudaatta – Svarit of Vedic chants

Hrsva – Dirgha – Pluta of alphabetic vowels

Akaara – Ukara – Makara – of Pranava Omkara

The three kutas of Srividya (Gayathri, Bala, Panchadashi or Shodashi):

Vagbhava

Kamarja and

Shakti Kutas

The three lokas or fields of experience:

BhuH – Earth

BhuvaH – Space and

SvaH – Heaven

The three Chakras:

Muladhara – Anahata – Ajna

Jnanis, the learned ones take these to be:

Pramaataa – Authority

Pramaana – Evidence and

Prameya – Theorem

The three Peethas:

Jaalandhara – Kamarupa – Purna Giri

The three holy concentration of Tirtha:

Nasik – Push Kara – Prayaga

The three spirits of the universe:

Aum – Tat – Sat according to the Vedas

Nara – Shiva – Shakti according to Tantra

Jiva – Jagat – Ishwara according to Vedanta

Ida – Sushumna – Pingala according to Kundalini Yoga

Past – Present – Future

Hridaya – Vyoma – Brahmarandhra

The three Varnas:

Brahmana - Kshatriya and Vaishya

The three Vedas:

Rig – Yajus and Sama Vedas

Amba appears to us in various forms and various manifestations. Remembering her as Sri Lakshmi, one overcomes the materialistic difficulties. By meditating on her as Jaya Durga, one obtains victory. One should meditate on her as Kshemankari while undertaking a dangerous journey so as to protect oneself. Amba helps us as a 'Shabari' or Vanadurga while crossing over difficult mountains covered with dreary forests. By praying to Maha Bhairavi, one can overcome the fear of spirits, ghosts, goblins and spirits. By meditating on Tara, one can overcome calamities wrought by drowning in floodwaters. She actually takes the Jiva across the ocean of Samsara.

By turning to Tripura, the last refuge, release is obtained from the cycle of birth and death.

Shaktopaya chiefly involves search for truth (Anveshana). This includes reflection, the means of fixing the mind on its object by thinking, concentration etc. without the aid of articulate repetition of the formulae. It consists in the practice of gathering knowledge for grasping the ultimate Truth. Therefore, Jnana Shakti predominates Shaktopaya, which is also called Jnanopaya. Knowledge of reality is established through the medium of 'origin and reflection' or Bimba-Pratibimba Vada, the principle that - main factors that exist in the lower sphere, have their original source in the higher plane. The Pashyanti, Madhyama and Vaikhari that exist in manifestation, have their existence in the higher level of Para.

In the spiritual lore propounded by the Agamas, the two feet of Amba stand for the two divine powers of Shiva- Shakti i.e. Jnana Shakti and Kriya Shakti, the important means of manifestation. The foot representing Jnana Shakti is stable, quiescent whereas the foot representing Kriya Shakti is involved in divine activity. This refers to the highly esoteric form of Ardhanariswara or Ardhanareshwari. Hence Abhiyukta says: 'May that one breast of Amba, emerging like a golden pot in a propitious manner of oneness with Shiva, confer bliss, for drinking of nectar (milk) for which Kumara and Ganesha are ever quarrelling with each other'.

The higher foot of Nirvana Charana represents the source-energy for accomplishment of divine liberating wisdom. In yogic parlance, this refers to the concentrating point of prana and apana where the two combine to enter the Sushumna. That becomes possible through the infusing power of the preceptor as that alone opens the gateway to Shivam, signifying the mysterious realization of universal oneness. This state of secret transformation comes to happen in the case of very intense Shaktipata, when Parashakti through the Guru, makes the ego sink to it very depth, not to sprout anymore.

The three Upayas – Anava, Shakta and Shaambhava – for realization have been described. Then their combination actually concludes in Anuttara. That is the state of Jagadananda in which the universe also is divinized and becomes one with the Self. It is experiencing the charm of bliss everywhere and every time. It is the experience of indivisibility flashing forth all round, both inside and outside. Consciousness alone expresses itself as the knower, the known and the means of knowledge. It gains in intensity with the nectar of divine joy of absolute sovereignty, when the yogi does not sit for contemplation. That is the state of all awareness of

Jagadananda. This surpasses the six states of spiritual delights of Ananda as enumerated below:

1. **Nijananda** – When the mind rests only on the subject of experience (Pramaata).
2. **Nirananda** – When the mind contemplates over the absence of all objects of experience.
3. **Parananda** – When there is contemplation on prana and apana jointly.
4. **Brahmananda** – When the mind rests on Samana, which unifies the various objects of experience.
5. **Mahananda** – When the mind rests in Udana after dissolving all knowledge and objects of knowledge in the Self.
6. **Chidananda** - When the mind rests in Vyana.

This fivefold glory of Paraamba is as follows:

- **Srishti** – Act of creation.
- **Sthiti** – Act of protecting the manifestation.
- **Samhara** – Act of withdrawal of the manifestation.
- **Tirodhaana or Vilaya** – Veiling of the self.
- **Anugraha** – Grace or self-revelation.

Each of these is also accomplished by the individual soul Jiva:

1. Whatever appears through the successive functioning of the deities or perceptual functions is Aabhaasana or Srishti.
2. Relishing the experience till it is maintained by the deity of preservation is called Raktee or Sthiti.

3. Knowledge of withdrawal of an object at the time of Vimarsha represents Samhara.
4. When withdrawal of the experience of manifoldness generates various impressions or Samskaras of doubt, inwardly it becomes the germ of Samsara and is bound to spring forth into existence again. This concealment of the real nature of self is Vilaya or Beejaavasthaapana.
5. When all doubt and any other experience of the time are burnt to sameness with the fire of consciousness, the Yogi enters the state of Grace and the true self is revealed to him. This is Anugraha or Vilaapana by Hatha Paaka.

By the process of Hatha Paaka, Yogi enters the state of Grace. This is a persistent process of reducing completely the world of experience to oneness with the real essence of the experiment. This device is called Alamgraasa or Swaatmasaatkaranam – bringing the object of experience to sameness with the self, when no Samskaras or germ of Samsara as separate from consciousness is allowed to remain. Divine Grace is unconditional .it is the free and sovereign will of Parashakti, to bless a Sadhaka who si understood to be free from he subtlest trait of ego. It is bindu, the point of locus between anywhere and everywhere, virtually not obtained by any human effort. It may descend on anyone, anywhere, whenever it chooses. It is beyond the human intellect to understand the play of Amba's Grace, which is spontaneous and comes unaware. Only the brave in the in awareness of the Divine, may rise to the occasion.

In Kundalini yoga, the heart refers to the center called Shakti Kundalini. It is the place in a Yogi's body, where Visuddhi Chakra is in operation at the base of the throat, Kantha-Moola-Sthana. The egressing prana is directed up towards Lambika (Chatushpatha) square for Sushumna to bloom in a shining spark of bliss. This is called Urdhwa Rechaka in Kriya yoga. With control of prana (prana Shakti), under the direct instructions of an adept teacher (Guru yukti), the latent energy is awakened and by Mother's grace directed through Sushumna nadi to the heart. Since this energy flashes from the base with enormous force and heat, it is called Vahni Kundalini. The yogi can thus control his breath, mind and semen. On awakening of the Kundalini, the prana enters Brahma nadi, which is called the middle path (Madhya Marga). This passage, which is extraordinarily thin like the fiber of a lotus stalk, appears vermilion-red with the instant rise of Shakti. This is the effulgent nature of the goddess in Kriya Shakti aspect. She is Nishkala, without any interruption. Mahatripurasundari is of the very nature of Kundalini who on being

awakened, blooms in Sahasrara after arousing to action the six centers or Chakras. This is called Shatchakrabhedana.

When the power of will of Paraabhataarika predominates, it depicts her Virgin hood i.e. the Shakti Bala. The power of will indistinctly flows predominating over the power of knowledge that projects further to give natural shape to the conception of world manifestation. Mahamaya is the sixth category in the order of evolution towards manifestation. It is the stage where shrinkage of Abheda and appearance of Bheda takes place. Mahamaya works her power of enchantment in the process of creation. When Parashakti is pleased to grace an aspirant, she, instead of distracting the senses, directs those towards realization of supreme unity. She leads from difference to non-difference. Therefore, she is the great power called Mahashakti, the great power of surprise, which she displays in evolution as well as in involution. Her untainted glory shines everywhere. In the involutionary process of recognizing the Supreme Reality, it is the practice of experiencing spontaneous concentration, which is gifted by the Divine Sovereignty, Mahamaya, not attainable with human effort. As a means of self-realization, it is called Shambhavopaya. Though the reality remains apparently concealed yet it is inwardly revealed to the few when divinity chooses. In Tantra, this method is also called Iccha yoga. It is intuitional in nature and only those of graceful intellect may be favored with this superior kind of yoga. The preceding means of mental doing (Kriyopaya) and knowledge (Jnanopaya) are pushed to the background when the Shambhavopaya is revealed to an earnest aspirant though he does not seem working for and towards it. The element of will shines in one's pure being to attain prominence in being perfect. Entering thoroughly the all-pervading Supreme consciousness with deep and steady knowledge of the Self of Divine Grace is Shambhavopaya, which boosts for ecstasy in a higher degree of Shaktipata.

The numerous powers of Parameshwara bear close affinity to the Yogi when Amba blesses him, on revealing her graceful divinity in his heart. He develops concentration or balanced state of abiding spiritual joy. Here the four forms of Samprajnata Samadhi become relevant, through which the great Yogini Shaktis desire to help the Sadhaka. They are:

1. **Savitarka Samadhi** – the Yoginis think of seeing the yogi constantly i.e. the yogi experiences deliberative concentration.

2. **Nirvitarka Samadhi** – Merging the whole being of the Yogini in the Yogi– connotes super-deliberative concentration.
3. **Savichara Samadhi** – Merging the whole being of the Yogi into Her – connotes reflective concentration.
4. **Nirvichara Samadhi** - To be one with the yogi – points to super-reflective concentration.

These four kinds of concentration are included in the balanced state called Sabija Samadhi or Bahirvastubija Samadhi, because there is some support or impression still in the yogi's mind. After this state, the yogi proceeds to gain in internal undisturbed calm or equipoise called the Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

There are twelve ways of surrender to the glory of the goddess who is the pervading power of Iccha, Jnana and Kriya. She manifests through these powers individually as well as collectively. She also throws open the portals of liberation for devotees, who love her with all their being and obedience to her will. The twelve ways discussed in the Shastra are:

1. Meditating on Amba as one's true Self. (Dhyana)
2. Attaining the grace of knowing Her. (Vetti)
3. Reciting her holy names and mantras. (Japati)
4. Perceiving her everywhere. (Alokayati)
5. Thinking of her all the time. (Chintayati)
6. Obeying her. (Anveti)
7. Surrender the ego to her. (Pratipadayate)
8. Understand her. (Kalayati)
9. Laud her. (stauti)
10. Take shelter in her. (Ashrayati)

11. Worship her. (Archayati)
12. Listen to her divine attributes with spontaneous attention. (gunaanaakarnayati).

It will be interesting to know that these twelve ways of meditation correspond with the twelve matras of Pranava for realization of the ultimate reality. These are what are described as A, U, M, Ardhachandra, Bindu, Nirodhika, Nada, Nadanta, Shakti, Vyapini, Samana and Unmana. The twelfth matra constitutes the seat of the venerable Para that transcends the others. Then the yogi listens to the divine attributes with spontaneous attention and becomes blissfully free.

Kundalini is Chit Shakti, the life force or the power of consciousness, from which alone originate the currents of energy. The aim of Tantra is to control and regulate these currents to make them flow to sublimer channels by the Tantric Kundalini Yoga. The ego is the main obstruction in the flow of this Energy towards the right course, which leads to bliss, eternal beauty, peace and unsurpassable joy. Kundalini expresses itself through the path of the Yogi nerve system. Kundalini is already half-awakened in every individual maintaining normal life in the body. The more it is awakened the more beauty, more joy and more life there is. Prana Kundalini works at physical level, Nada Kundalini at mental level and Bodha or Jnana Kundalini at spiritual level.

Kundalini is also classified on the basis of its place of residence:

1. **Adhah Kundalini** – it is the power of primordial existence, lying dormant at the Muladhara. It is the cosmic life that underlies all organic and inorganic matter.
2. **Urdhwa Kundalini** – it has the entrance at the Brahmarandhra. It is the place of union of Ida and Pingala at the Ajna Chakra between the two eyebrows.
3. **Paraa Kundalini** – it is the transcendent state of Paramashiva. In human it is recognized as Mount Kailasa in Sahasrara and beyond.

Mechakaabha Tantra gives some other names to the six charkas and these are very meaningful, significant names. Nada Chakra at Muladhara, Maya Chakra at the navel, Yoga Chakra at the heart, Bhedana chakra at the Lambika or the palate (this chakra is frequently referred to by texts dealing with Lambika Yoga. Sri

Vidyashankara Mahaswamigal of Sringeri Sarada Peetham is eternally absorbed in Lambika Yoga Samadhi to this day in the form of Chaturmurtishwara Shivalinga, above which a beautiful temple of Shiva has been constructed. This is called Vidya Shankara temple. The great Guru clears doubts of earnest devotees who meditate in this sacred place), Dipti Chakra at the Brow center and Santa Chakra at Brahmarandhra.

The number six is very significant. It is most commonly mistaken to be Swadhishtana Chakra at most places. This however may indicate the inner course of Srichakra and should be understood from an efficient Guru who is much advanced in Saktha practices. The Six-petalled lotus refers to the mystic physiology of Sushumna. In Muladhara, there is a triangle known as Shiva Trikona, together with another one known as Shakti Trikona. The two triangles join in such a way that their apexes are opposite each other. In Yogic parlance, the place in physical body is the Ajna Chakra. While Shiva and Shakti are separately triadic, their union is hexagonal. The union of Shiva Trikona, which is the Bindu and the Shakti Trikona, which is the Yoni, is called the Shatkona Mudra or the Shambhavi Mudra. Then there is a Kanda, which is a samputa of Shiva and Shakti. This is known as Omkara Peetham, the seat of Bija Mantra.

Then there is also the Hrit Karnikaa also called Mukha Mudra, which is the center of the heart lotus. The yogis are advised to meditate on the above said Kanda as if it were the heart lotus. These have been called 'lotuses' only in a figurative sense because they are endowed with the characteristics of expansion and contraction like a lotus. This Hrit Kamala is called Amrita Bija. This practice leads Yogis to Jagadaananda state.

According to the great saint Swami Lakshman Joo, advanced Yogis experience Kundalini in three states. The first is the tranquil state and remains limited to Moolaadhaara. This state works in all created beings. When the Kundalini gets awakened either by Pranayama or in the classical way of constant practice or uninterrupted feeling of the perfect ness of I – consciousness, it is called Adhah Kundalini. After this state, when Kundalini, like lightening gives a sudden and straight flash and rises through the path of Sushumna to Brahmarandhra, it is called Urdhwa Kundalini.

Practice of meditation on the two spots is called Aadyantakoti Nibhaalana, explained in Paraatrimshikaa. Aadikoti is called Bahirdwaadashaanta and Antakoti is called Antardwaadashaantia, which may respectively understood as Adhah and

Urdhwa Kundalini. Their union is the Shatkona Mudra, often referred to as Shatpatra Kamala. The yogi is advised to meditate on the locus of a point, which has neither beginning nor end, and expanding the fifteen vowels, resides in the heart lotus of Shiva, who is the sixteenth. The seventeenth Kalaa is the unwavering repose called Bindukalaa, where the movement of both Prana and Apana ceases. This is called Somaamsham. This is the main significance behind Tarpana of Mahasaptadashi Nitya, even beyond the Shodashi Nitya during the course of Nitya Kalaarchanam. The correspondence is to Turiyaatiitaa and Turiyaa. By practicing SomamaSham by viewing all objects of the world as nothing but the manifestation of the Paraa Bija Sauh (or the third Koota of Srividya, with or without the final Shodashi Kalaa, depending on one's qualification), one attains the Jagadaananda Dasha – the monistic state of sameness of the Supreme self, unconditional and unhindered. This is Supreme Bliss, Shaktipata of Shiva.

Very few advanced Yogis find repose, by a graceful knack, in the steadiness of breath, after a long and constant practice. Here we talk about the next alternative i.e. the Pranayama. This coveted experience of a Yogi is called Urdhwa Kumbhaka, flow of super consciousness. Just as churning curds results in a ball of butter, which keeps floating and simultaneously increasing in volume on the surface of the churned milk, so does refined intellect i.e. awareness of supreme consciousness float free from any malignancy of duality. The two principal functions of the vital airs are exhalation and inhalation. Among human beings, some Yogis offer the act of inhalation into that of exhalation. There are still others, who offer inhalation into exhalation. [Now these esoterically refer to the 14th and 15th Kriyas of the Siddha tradition. Many Kriyabans are familiar with this I suppose. It is now known that Lahiri Mahasaya taught a total of 8 Kriyas to a chosen few among his vast number of Chelas. There are 72 Kriyas in all, with some knowing upto 25 Kriyas in the contemporary times. The final two of the 25 are the Samhara Kriya, (by which a Yogi may exit consciously via the Brahmarandhra) and Brahmamelana Kriya also known as Ananda Kriya, Maha Kriya, Samadhi Kriya, Kulaamrita Kriya, Niraalamba Kriya etc by different traditions.] These two paths refer to Devayaana or utara maarga and Pitryaana or Dakshina maarga. But there is a superior path beyond these two. This is called the Bhairavi stage, which results in Kriyaa Shoonyata. I think this is too complicated to be discussed in this context and hence I will leave it at this].

Yaana means vehicle or chariot in Sanskrit. As a verb it means moving or riding. In Yogic parlance, it refers to entering the Sushumna. One may find entrance to the Royal path of Sushumna in different ways and by different means. Taking Devayaana way with the inferior means of Aanavopaaya, one has the predominance

of Prana, egress and with Saktopaaya, one is influenced more with knowledge of the self. Taking Pitryaana way with the Inferior means of Aanavopaaya, one has the predominance of Apaana and in Saaktopaaya one finds it in action. But, the highest means is the Shambhavopaaya, where the devotee keeps constant touch with the Divine in the bipolar process of Prakasha and Vimarsha i.e. the predominance of Shiva and Shakti respectively. He ever moves in and as Divine.

vande guruM sha~Nkaram

Srividya Upasana Tattva

AtmAbhinnashivAkAraM chidAnandaghanaM guham |
prakAshaM vimalaM shAntaM brahmaNyaM samupAsmahe ||

vande gurupadadwandwaM avA~Ngmanasagocharam |
raktashuklaprabhAmishramatarkyaM traipuraM mahaH ||

|| gaM gaNapataye namaH ||

It is indeed the divine grace of our revered Guru Sri Chidanandanatha that continues to guide the devotees in the kind of tasks that were very close to his heart and on which he spent his entire life. Propagating the tenets of Srividya and discussing and bringing about a unified approach to the two aspects thereof – the ritualistic and the philosophical, was a task that was the mainstay of his life. Having been initiated into Srividya in the year 1911, when he was 29 years of age, at the lotus hands of Sri Guhanandanatha at the holy Allahabad, on the auspicious Mahodaya occasion, he began his Upasana. For the first twelve years, he practiced his Upasana in private as directed by his Guru and in line with the orders of the Lalita Sahasranama (rahoyAgakramArAdhyA, rahastapaNatarpitA, antarmukhasaArAdhyA). After this period, Upasana and propagation of Srividya became his sole mission in life. If we look at the benefits that have accrued to a large number of eligible disciples through initiation into this holy science by Sri Chidanandanatha, we would be wonderstruck.

A devotee visited the Sringeri Acharya's abode and stayed there for three days. At the end of his sojourn, the Acharya asked him how he enjoyed his stay there. Prompt came the reply that it was 'Brahmananda'. Then the Acharya quizzed him as to how he knew Brahmananda and whether he had experienced it before and if he had not, how he could recognize it. The message is that there is a natural state of pleasure, which is the real nature of the atman and when that is felt, the one who experiences it recognizes it as his natural state. All other pleasures that are acquired through the worldly experiences are artificial or Kritrima. These are temporary and ephemeral and so do not last. The end of every such experience is pain causing. In his brilliant introduction to the Brahma sutra Bhashyas edited by Mahamahopadhyaya Anantakrishna Shastrigal, the Shankaracharya of Govardhana Peetham of Puri establishes Sat, chit, ananda, Moksha and Ishana (suzerainty) as the natural state of the soul in every human being.

The absolute and eternal pleasure – Brahmananda, is something, which is natural and is referred to as Moksha. This is generally translated as liberation. To attain Kama, one needs Artha or wealth. That wealth must be acquired by dharma, another difficult but frequently and commonly used word. The connotation of this word is – `acting always in a manner consistent with the inherent nature of the experience-r and experienced. This, Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha are referred to as the goals of human life. The understanding of these four terms will give one a broad indication of the purpose of all philosophical and material pursuits. This being so, it becomes the religious duty of every individual to practice Dharma in its proper spirit, acquire wealth and apply that for attaining the last two.

Hindu scriptures prescribe three different but intertwining paths to attain liberation and these are: karma, Bhakti and Jnana. Of these, karma directs the individual to perform faithfully all the duties, actions and procedures prescribed by the Vedas and Shastras as befitting a man's Varna and Ashrama. The Bhakti path is where the individual is given the choice of a form of the Divine Entity to contemplate, worship, meditate, and perform Pooja etc. The Absolute that is formless, is allowed to be conceived of as having a form to enable the human mind to hold on to something and make progress in the Bhakti route. This Bhakti also consists of three distinct groups of activities:

- a. Activities by the mind like Japa and Dhyana;
- b. Activities of the organs like Pooja
- c. Activities of the word of mouth like chanting prayers.

Depending on one's preference or inclination, one can stick to only one of the three or more of one and less of the others.

The practice of Bhakti in all its three forms constitutes Upasana. There the form to be adopted as the object of devotion is also a matter of choice. Indeed, Bhagavan Krishna assures us that he confers on the sincere devotee, unwavering devotion to the chosen form. There are six Upasana paths known as the Shanmatas, properly codified and defined by the great Acharya, Sri Adi Shankara Bhagavatpada. They are: Ganapatya, Saura, Vaishnava, Shaiva, Shakta and Kaumara. As the name of each indicates, each one has a different form of deity as the object of worship; the other paths of Japa, Dhyana and the ritual of puja are all the same. Of these, Shakta is the one where the form of Shakti is worshipped as Mother. Interestingly, of the six, this

is the only Upasana (i.e. Srividya Upasana) that is always reverentially referred to with the attribute 'Sri'. The principal form of worship here is that of Shakti or energy. That way, this can also be viewed as worship of the energy aspect of the remaining five forms and therefore, this integrates all the six methods into one. While for the sake of conceptualizing, the power or energy is viewed as a distinct entity, it is needless to say that it cannot be physically separated from that of which this is the power. Hence the dictum, 'ShaktiH shaktimatorabhedaH'. The substratum on which this Shakti inheres is referred to as 'Shaktiman', which is Shiva or Kameswara himself. In other words, we try to conceive of the single entity Shiva as basic or residual Shiva and its Shakti separately. It is only logical that if one can conceive of such a dichotomy of a single individual being, when Shakti is taken out, what remains must be something inert (jaDa). That is the profound principle with which Acharya's Saundaryalahari starts.

Consistent with the physical science, this Shakti can be of two forms again: potential and kinetic. In this system, the potential form is referred to as Prakasha (effulgence) and the kinetic as Vimarsha (illuminating). The effulgence is the inherent characteristic of the first by which the seen world is illuminated, enabling us to see. This is the explanation of the Shakta system for the universe and the power that makes it to be seen by all of us. In a higher plane, the concept of Guru also is conceived as made up of the same principles of Prakasha and Vimarsha. The Guru as the torch, remains the source of light and simultaneously the seen world. Guru Padukas are always referred to as Prakasha and Vimarsha. Another way of explaining this is by saying Prakasha is the absolute Brahman and Vimarsha is the individual Jivatman, the guru representing the state of Advaita, where the distinction of Jiva and Brahman ceases to exist.

As mentioned earlier, there are three paths to liberation. However, these are not mutually exclusive but have among themselves some amount of overlapping. Interestingly, in the path of Jnana itself, Adi Shankara stresses the Bhakti aspect. Acharya has cleverly reconciled these two in his Vedantic definition of Bhakti as the individual meditating upon or worshipping himself. Bhakti or Upasana is of two kinds: Gowni and Para. This first is also known as Sagunopasana. The human mind which finds it impossible to visualize the Absolute, is provided with a form of deity with face, hands, legs etc., so that the mind has something to hold on to, rather than a formless Brahman. All worships generally are with respect to a form of the Absolute. This form would be of individual's choice or as indicated to him by his Guru. The fundamental principle here is one of visualizing or conceptualizing, which is called Bhavana. From this point of view, it would appear that Bhakti is a process of

reducing the adult mind to that of a child. For example, if a child gets a doll, then it sees that as a real baby in flesh and blood and tries to do all acts of affection and love to that doll, adopting the role of a mother. This means that an imaginary baby wholly replaces the concept of the doll. A serious bhakta never perceives the idol or the picture or a Chakra that he worships as anything different from the Divine form of God. This is the essential requirement for Bhakti. Having started to believe that the form he worships is his beloved deity, the other activities or rituals cover the various tasks to be performed such as seating, bathing etc. This whole process is commonly referred to as performing a Pooja. Physically, there are sixteen such acts known as Upacharas.

1. Asana – offering a seat to the deity
2. Padya – offering water for washing the feet
3. Arghya – offering water for internal purification
4. Achamana - offering water to be taken in
5. Snana – offering a bath
6. Vastra – offering a dress
7. Abharana – offering ornaments
8. Gandha – offering sandal paste
9. Pushpa – offering flowers
10. Dhoopa – offering incense
11. Deepa – offering light
12. Naivedya – offering eatables
13. Tamboola – offering betel leaves and nut
14. Stotra – offering prayers

15. Pradakshina – going round the deity
16. Pranama – prostrating before the deity

These sixteen are the commonly offered Upacharas in any form of Pooja, always firmly believing in the form that is being worshipped.

These very sixteen Upacharas also have a deeper or inner significance, which could be related as the offerings to the Absolute without any form. Another method of offering these rites reckons these as a group of five and not sixteen. These are Gandha, Pushpa, Dhoopa, Deepa and Naivedya. This is called the Pancha Upachara Pooja. the basic objective is bringing out the Divine principle that inheres in every one of us out and visualizing it in the external picture, idol etc., and carrying the above mentioned sixteen or five Upacharas as one would do unto himself.

Performing these very rituals as part of the Pooja or Upasana in the Srividya sampradaaya is a little more elaborate with a number of special sets of tasks peculiar to this cult. To begin with, we have to understand the actual form that is accepted for worship in this Pooja. The generally accepted form for worship as Devi is an idol and a Chakra. Srichakra represents the creation and dissolution of the universe starting from the Brahman, which itself is depicted as the Bindu in the center of the Chakra.

The second requisite is what is known as a mantra. Any mantra is considered as a zealously guarded secret. A mantra is a collection of letters, which on its face may not convey any meaning. By definition, mantra means that by repeatedly meditating upon which one is saved. It is the duty of every devotee of Srividya to constantly meditate upon his mantra and chant it repeatedly so that there result repeated vibrations in the astral centers of the individual. These are never to be uttered aloud and therefore even the Vedas hint at these mantras in a coded language only. The prescribed mantra for Srividya worship is what is known as the Panchadashi. Literally translated, it means a fifteen-lettered mantra. Different seers have explained the meaning of this mantra in different ways. Nitya Shodashikarnava gives six different interpretations. Sri Bhaskararaya, in his magnum opus VarivasyaRahasya, gives fifteen interpretations. A Keralite scholar of this century, Perunkulam Veeraraghava Shastrigal has given more than 60 interpretations, which have received the approval of Sacchidananda Shivabhinava Nrisimha Bharati Mahaswamigal, the 33rd distinguished occupant of the Dakshinamnaya Sringeri Sarada Peetham, who was universally recognized as the foremost scholar of his

times. In essence, this mantra is considered as equal to the Vedic Mahavakyas, which clearly indicate the true nature of Brahman and the true nature of the individual self.

The first qualification for a Upasaka to perform Pooja is obtaining Diksha from a competent Guru. the rite called Diksha is supposed to be destroying all the limiting factors of the individual self and facilitate his union with Shiva.

**alyate shivasAyujaM kShlyate pAshabandhanam |
atha dikSheti kathitaM budhaiH sacChAstravedibhiH ||**

It is the Guru who, after testing the disciple's competence, initiates him into the Upasana by teaching him the mantra, the Devata Swaroopa and the methods of performing the rituals. Though the Sadhaka begins initially with external rituals, he should rise to the level of performing Antaryaga as set out in Bhavanopanishad. The first step in Bahiryaga is the method of entering the room of worship. Next follows Tatva Achamana. This is a cleansing process carried out by ingesting drops of water four times or seven times, praying each time for the cleansing of the Anava, Mayika and Karmika Malas, which is accomplished by the usage of Bija mantras. This prepares the Sadhaka's mental frame and sets it ready for the Jnana swaroopa to shine.

The next and the most important step is performing GuruPaduka Vandana. This involves paying one's respect to the lotus feet of the Guru. There is a special prescribed procedure for performing this. Guru's feet are supposed to be on the head of the Upasaka. Therefore, he has to worship with his hands locked in Mrigi Mudra, the sandals of the preceptor. This procedure calls for worshipping his own master (Guru), the Guru's Guru (Parama Guru) and his Guru (Parameshthi Guru). There are three separate mantras for each of these. The GuruPaduka mantras collectively connote the same concept as that of the Mahavakya – Tatvamasi. Actually, these syllables are represented one each by the three Paduka mantras.

The next step is ringing the bell. This is symbolic of referring to the evolution of the universe from Nada. By ringing the bell, the Devas are invited to the Pooja simultaneously warding off the evil thoughts and forces present in the vicinity. The actual part of the Pooja starts now with a declaration i.e. Sankalpa. This is done by doing Pranayama – breathing in, holding the breath and breathing out, using the Panchadashi or Shodashi mantra, as taught by the Guru. Then, the time and place in which the Upasaka is performing the Pooja are narrated with the prescribed

necessary time and space components. Accomplished Upasakas traditionally adopt the Ashtanga method of narrating the time, which is distinctive and unique to Srividya Upasana. Next in the order comes the seat on which one should sit and perform the Pooja. The directions pronounced by Lord Krishna in Gita – 'Having firmly fixed in a clean place, his seat, neither too high nor too low, and having spread over it the Kusha grass, a deer skin and a cloth one over the other', is adopted. One addition to this is the repetition of a certain mantra along with which water is sprinkled on the seat before being seated. Then follows a procedure for guarding oneself against external influences by a process known as Deharaksha. Then follows a Pushpanjali collectively to all the Devatas in the Srichakra and also obtaining from Sri Dakshinamurthy, the foremost guru in Dakshinachara and Samayachara, permission to proceed with Srichakra Navavarana Pooja.

Before actually invoking Sri Lalita Mahatripurasundari into the Srichakra, a minor rite called Prana Pratishtha is performed. This is actually fixing firmly the Yantra or Meru and energizing it before inviting the Devata to come and occupy it. The purport is an expression of the fact that the power that is present in our heart is brought out and conceived to be installed in the Chakra. Now, a series of small tasks, which are intended to bring into the Chakra the complete abode of Devi with all its components by naming each one and imagining its being made to be present in its appropriate position in the Srichakra. In reality, Sridevi's abode which is called as Srinagara contains a large number of oceans, islands, copses, gardens, surrounding spaces, moats and a central splendorous palace, as set out in sage Durvasa's Arya Dwishati. All these are, item by item, visualized in the Srichakra by referring to their individual names. Thus, in effect, we have kind of reconstructed mentally the Srinagara before us to worship the occupant thereof. We then have to light and install two lamps on either side of the Pooja mandala.

Next step is to get the individual ready to stand before this divine presence and perform the Pooja. This in turn involves five tasks:

1. Bhuta Shuddhi which is a process of cleansing all the effects of the physical elements of the individual's body by a series of Pranayama steps, chanting special Bija mantras simultaneously.
2. The way we fix firmly the deity being worshipped by a prana Pratishtha, the individual must also fix himself firmly by performing Atma Prana Pratishtha.
3. The next step is to perform Pranayama to ensure concentration.

4. The fourth ingredient is a ritual to ward off all evil tendencies around us by a process called Vighnotsarana.
5. The last in this category is known as the Shikha Bandha, which tying up one's hair into a knot to take care to prevent the hair from getting loose frequently and interfering with the rituals connected with the Pooja. Today it is indeed rare to find a male individual with uncropped hair; hence the ritual, though a real one, has become imaginary.

The second major part of the Pooja rituals is what is known as Nyasa. In Upasana, Nyasa refers to touching the various parts of our body, chanting a mantra and visualizing the presiding Shakti of that mantra to be present in that part of the body being touched. There is a whole lot of different Nyasas with different mantras being used in varying orders.

In the Navavarana Pooja, the following main Nyasas are generally performed:

1. **Matrika Nyasa** (Antarmatrika and Bahirmatrika Nyasa).

Actually there are 14 types of Matrika Nyasas prescribed namely, Bindumatrika, Visargamatrika, Binduvisargamatrika, Hrillekhadimatrika, Bijadimatrika, Kamadimatrika, Tribijadimatrika, Balasamputitamatrika, Parasamputitamatrika, Srividayuktamatrika, Hamsamatrika, Paramahamsamatrika, Pranavakalamatrika and Ashtatrimshatkala Matrika Nyasas. In addition to these, if the Sadhaka is also initiated into the Vaishnava angas of Srividya, he should perform Keshava Matrika Nyasa, Srikantha Matrika Nyasa if initiated into the Shaiva angas and Prapanchayaga Matrika Nyasa if initiated into Maha Ganapathi mantra. Bhutilipi Nyasa gives raip Siddhi of the mantra.

2. **Karashuddhi Nyasa**
3. **Atmaraksha and Balashadanga Nyasa**
4. **Chaturasana (or Shadasana) Nyasa**
5. **Antashchakra and Bahishchakra Nyasas**
6. **Mahakameswaryadi Nyasa**

7. **Moola Vidya Varna Nyasa**
8. **Laghu Shoda Nyasa** (which involves Ganesha, Graha, Nakshatra, Yogini, Rashi and Pitha Nyasas)
9. **Maha Shodha Nyasa** (which involves Prapancha, Bhuvana, Murti, Mantra, Daivata and Matrika Bhairava Nyasas)
10. **Srichakra Nyasa** (again of three types: Srishti, Sthiti and Samhara)

Only Upasakas who have been initiated into Maha Shodashi mantra can perform Maha shodha Nyasa. Special Nyasas like Kama Rati Nyasa, MathaNyasa, Shodashakshari Nyasa, NavasanaNyasa etc. are to be performed only by people having Poorna Diksha. Certain Nyasas like Navayoni Nyasa, Yogapitha Nyasa etc are optional. There are also Nyasas like Guhya Shodha Nyasa, Para Shodha Nyasa, Kamakala Maha Nyasa (involving Paramparya, AntarbahiH, Para, Pashyanti, Madhyama, Vaikhari, Ayudha and Bhushana Nyasas), Mahashakti Nyasa, NavakashaNyasa, Shambhvadi Charana Nyasa, Urdhwamnaya Nyasas, Aghorika, Panchavaktra, Pancharatna, Divyaughadi, Shabdarshi etc, and Shadanvaya Mahashambhava Nyasa (Rashmi ShaTka Nyasa), MahaPaduka Nyasa, Maha Maha Paduka Ashtottarashata Kala Maha Nyasa - which require various higher initiations (even after the Poorna Diksha) like Diksha of Para Shodashi, Para Paduka, Guhya Shodashi, Guhya Paduka, the five Padukas and Maha Shambhava Diksha.

Before moving on to the next set of rites in this Pooja procedure, one will have to study and understand the implications of these various Nyasas, which are very important. Some similar kinds of Nyasas are also performed even when one is not performing Pooja but only does Japa. Every mantra to be chanted will have to be along with some elements of the Japa process and these are Rishi, Chandas, Devata, Karanyasa and Anganyasa.

We now move on to the fourth part of the Pooja procedure which is known as Patrasadanam, which literally means spreading out vessels between the devotee and the Srichakra in a prescribed manner and a ceremonious manner. The following vessels are recognized as obligatory in this regard:

1. Kalasha or Vardhani for keeping water for various sundry purposes.

2. Shankha or conch also known as Samanya Arghya Patra to contain water for certain special uses.
3. Vishesha Arghya Patra to contain a special liquid prepared for the Pooja.
4. Shuddhi Patra
5. Guru Patra
6. Atma Patra
7. Bali patra intended for offering Bali to the forces present around us as a reward for not interfering with the Pooja.

For each one of these Patras, there are fixed positions in the layout, a mandala of a particular design, a method of filling the patra with the appropriate content and a sequence of performing certain rites on each of them, chanting the relevant mantras. This part of the Pooja is a very elaborate one. There is a set of apparent and esoteric meanings for each of these, which have to be fully understood. The contents of each of these vessels have specific application and disposal in the Pooja process. Yet another aspect of this is that these vessels and their contents symbolically represent the very same type of corresponding vessels with connected rituals in performing a Yagna or a sacrifice. It is this aspect that establishes a connection between this particular Pooja with the rituals connected with a Yagna, thereby bringing about integration between the karma and Bhakti paths. This is a very important and special feature of Srividya. Hence Srichakra Navavarana Pooja is also referred to as Yagna. At the end of the Pooja, there is a prayer, which says, "Jagat Yagnena Tripyatu".

At the end of these rites, the Kundalini Shakti, which is supposed to be Sridevi herself, is addressed with certain mantras and offerings. Ultimately to a person who keeps on performing this Pooja with great care and attention, the Kundalini which is normally dormant, gets kindled and starts moving upward along the Sushumna path towards the upper part of the head which houses the Sahasrara. After this commences the Pooja to all the deities who reside in the Srichakra. Another difference to be recognized at this stage is that while other Poojas are done with flower alone, in this Pooja, offerings are made by both hands – flowers in the right and a piece of ginger held in a clasp in the left which is dipped in Vishesha Arghya

and droplets thereof being offered simultaneously with the flowers. The utterance is thus 'Pujayami and Tarpayami'.

The Pooja in this part begins with requesting Sridevi to present Herself in the Srichakra to enable us to perform the Pooja. This is called Avahana. The concept is to bring out the Devi present in your heart and install her in the Srichakra before you. This is not only done mentally but also physically using a mantra and Trikhanda Mudra. Now, we have the divine element present in us installed securely in the external Srichakra. Then the 64 Upacharas are offered to Devi to please her and make her extremely happy. The detailed Aavarana Pooja starts with worshipping the Chaturayatana deities. These are Ganesha, Surya, Vishnu and Shiva. These four occupy the four corners of the square, which contains the Srichakra.

First, the fifteen Nitya Devis are worshipped as the powers that rule the fifteen days in a fortnight. In the bright half of the fortnight, they are worshipped starting from Kameswari whereas the Pooja begins with Chitra Nitya in the dark half. There is a sixteenth Nitya known as Maha Nitya, who is none other than Sridevi herself from whom these fifteen emerge. The purpose of this part of the Pooja is to comprehend that time itself has emanated from, and is subordinate to Sridevi. Then Pooja is offered to the Guru Parampara or the lineage of gurus. The Gurus are conceived as belonging to four separate groups: first is Paraugha and the rest are Divya, Siddha and Manavaugha. The first offering is to the highest Guru ruling over the present cycle of time known as Sri Charyanandanatha. Next in priority is Sri Dakshinamurthy. After that, the full lineage of Gurus is offered Pooja. Thirty-one Gurus are mentioned by name with Adi Shankara Bhagavatpada's as the thirty-second. These are then followed by the devotee's Parameshti, Parama and Swagurus.

The Pooja then moves over to the worship of the deities in the nine enclosures of Srichakra. Pooja is offered next to five groups of Devis who are conceived to be located over the Bindu in Srichakra in a five-fold Peetha. These goddesses represent the stages through which the Sadhaka has to pass, in moving from Savikalpa Samadhi to Nirvikalpa state. After this, Pooja is offered to the deities of the Shanmatas and six Chakras. There are four amnyas (six for Maha Shodashi Upasakas), each one containing a sizable number of individual Devatas. These can be offered Pooja and Tarpana individually or in groups. After this, depending on the availability of time, archana is performed with Sahasranama, Trishati or Ashtottara. Trishati archana is always performed with Kumkuma. The concluding part of the Pooja includes Dhoopa, Deepa, Naivedya, Tamboola, Karpura Nirajana and Mantra Pushpa. At this point, it becomes necessary to mention two additional features,

which are peculiar to Srividya Upasana. They are the Arartikam and Kuladipam. These are one set of nine lamps and a single lamp made out of wheat flour, sugar and ghee and lit. After this, Suvasini Pooja and Tatvashodhana are performed. Yet another special feature of this Pooja is that it is not only the main devotee who performs the Pooja but after he has finished, others also partake in the ritual by each one performing what is known as Samayika Pooja. It is practically a very short form of the principal Pooja so that everybody present also gets the satisfaction of having himself performed the Pooja. It is also a means of training the aspirant to acquire the competence to himself perform the Pooja in due course.

In the context of Srividya Upasana, two more aspects remain to be explained. One of them is what is collectively known as Pancha Makara. These are five things representing the five physical elements, which are denoted through Madya, Mamsa, Matsya, Mudra and Maithuna. Of these, Madya refers to the principle of fire, Matsya to water, Mamsa to earth, Mudra to Vayu and Maithuna to ether. The use of these five in their real physical forms, though used by certain cults, is not prescribed for a Satvika Upasaka. Adi Shankara has actually condemned the use of these and has practically banned Pooja performance with these things in their normal form. These articles are to be used by those at the lowest level of evolution. The intention is to curb and channel their natural propensity to use these, by prescribing elaborate rituals and procedures and sanctifying them. For the evolved Sadhakas, these five connote the five Tanmatras, which are the five arrows of Mahatripurasundari. Madya is the ambrosia flowing from the Chit Chandra mandala, Mamsa means the control of tongue, the two Matsyas are the Ida and Pingala, Mudra refers to the center of Sahasrara and Maithuna is the union of Jivatman and Paramatman. The Shastras have pointed out that the use of these articles in their literal form is like walking on the edge of a sword, embracing a tiger and wearing a snake.

As referred to earlier, every area of Srichakra contains a variety of Devatas. There are separately described procedures for performing Pooja for each of them. Each of these Devis is ruling over one or the other aspects of secular life like health, wealth, happiness, education, winning over rivals or competitors, achieving particular special powers etc. While the total worship of Sri Lalita Mahatripurasundari through the Aavarana Pooja will grant everything in this world and the other and lead one to total liberation at the end, these particular literally lesser powers have the way of granting whatever is specifically asked for separately. Besides, there are separate Aavarana Pooja procedures in regard to some of the Anga Devatas of Devi in Srichakra such as Maha Ganesha, Varahi, Shyamala, Chandi, Subrahmanya, Dakshinamurthy, and Swarnakarshana Bhairava etc. In addition, there is one Pooja

addressed to a particular form known as Shadanvaya Shambhavi which is in fact, a Pooja addressed to Devi in her form completely one with KAMESWARA. This worship is considered to be ultimate because it even transcends the gender and takes one on to a single principle. A complete description of this together with all the necessary concepts is provided in the fourteenth Shloka of Saundaryalahari and in the detailed commentary thereon by several learned commentators. The six principles referred to in these are of the five gross, physical elements, earth, water etc., together with the mind as the sixth element. Hence this is considered to be the ultimate to be pursued by the devotee who aspires for liberation from all the worldly attractions. Although the detailed procedures are set out in this compendium, only the Adhikari should undertake this form of worship for this. The prerequisite is not only poorna Diksha with initiation into Maha Shodashi but also the higher initiation of Maha Shaambhava Diksha and the initiation into Shaambhava Maha Padukas and other secret mantras. The three higher Saparyas – Shadanvaya Shambhavi, Dakshinamurthy Aavarana or Brahmavidya Mandala Pooja and the Guru mandala Pooja, these have to be performed only on Pancha Parvas by the above said Adhikari. These five occasions are the birthday of Guru, Diksha day of Guru, Chitra Pournami, Guru Pournami and the Guru Kaivalya parva. Without complete guidance from the Guru, these procedures bring grave results to the Sadhaka. Saubhagya Hridaya Stava gives more details about these procedures.

Independent of all the above, there is in practice a procedure called Chandi or Durga paddhati. This is also considered as one of the Devi's forms that inhere in the Srichakra. However, there is not much mentioned about this in the popular Srichakra Pooja procedures. There is a Smriti which says: Kalau chaNDI vinAyakau. This means in the age of kali, the two Devatas to be worshipped are Chandi and Ganapathi. The worship of these two will itself give the benefit of other forms of worship. The basis for this Chandi Upasana is found in Devi Bhagavata as well as the Markandeya Purana, which contains the well-known Saptashati. This narrates the three tales of Sridevi fighting and destroying the evil forces in the forms of Madhu, Kaithabha, Mahishasura and Shumbha – Nishumbha. These stories are narrated in thirteen chapters in the form of seven hundred stanzas or half stanzas. Each of these is considered as an independent mantra by repeating which one attains profound benefits. In addition, the mantra prescribed for this is what is known as Navakshari, the nine-lettered mantra that has its basis in the Atharva Shirsha Upanishad, known as the Devi Upanishad.

The reader who has read so far would have got an idea of the fundamental concepts of Srividya and the external Navavarana Pooja. The oft-quoted saying -

**YatrAsti bhogo na tatra mokShaH yatrAsti mokShaH na tu tatra bhogaH |
Shrisundari sAdhakapuMgavAnAM bhogashcha mokshashcha karastha eva ||**

'Where there is worldly enjoyment, there is no salvation; where there is salvation, there is no worldly enjoyment. For the great worshippers of Sri Sundari, both worldly enjoyment and salvation are at hand' – will come alive with a new significance.

Nowadays, most of the Brahmanas do not study the Vedas, but still respect them. There is a firmly entrenched conviction, arising from centuries of Samskara, that anything commended by the Vedas must be for our good. Hence, an intending Shakti Upasaka would like to know whether there is Vedic authority for this Upasana. In today's aggressively materialistic environment, we have got conditioned to look for user testimonials and customer lists while acquiring even mundane articles. It is understandable that this approach is applied to the Upasana marga as well.

The foremost of Srividya Upasakas have been Vasishta, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumara and Shuka, who wrote the manuals of Samayachara known as the Shubhagama Panchaka. Sage Durvasas, also known as Krodha Bhattaraka, who Lalita Stavaratna or Arya Dwishati and Shakti Mahimna Stotra are read with devotion by pious people even today, formulated the Chintamani Pooja Kalpa, which is observed at the Sri Kamakshi temple at Kanchipuram. Sage Agastya, to whom Lord Maha Vishnu appearing as Hayagriva, taught Srividya including the Sahasranamas of Shyamala, Varahi and Sri Lalita, as well as the esoteric Trishati, is a well known Srividya Upasaka. Lopamudra, the wife of Agastya is the Rishi of the Hadi Vidya. Kalidasa, who's Chidgagana Chandrika contains the esoteric subtleties of this Upasana, is known as Laghu Bhattaraka or Sringara Bhattaraka. Sri Gaudapaadaachaarya, who is famously known as the author of Mandukya Karika, Subhagodaya Stuti and Srividya Ratna sutra, and as the guru of Adi Shankara Bhagavatpada, is the foremost of the gurus of Srividya Samayachara sampradaaya. Sri Adi Shankaracharya is widely regarded as the Avatara of Lord Mahadeva Dakshinamurthy himself and is famous for his Bhashya on the Prasthan Trayas, various Prakarana Granthas and Stotras, including the Saundaryalahari, the first 41 verses of which are a treasure house of mantra Shastra. His Prapanchasara is a compendium of the Upasana procedures of different deities. In all the monasteries established by Acharyal, the worship of Lord Chandramouleshwara and Sri Mahatripurasundari continues even today. Lakshmidhara, also known as Lolla, is a

great Upasaka of incomparable brilliance, whose commentary on Saundaryalahari is the best of the various versions available today. Sri Bhaskaracharya is an outstanding Upasaka and scholar of Srividya who has written definitive commentaries on Lalita Sahasranama, Saptashati, and Nityashodashikarnava etc. He has also written extensively on Srividya, the notable work being his Varivasya Rahasya. Sri Appayya Dikshita, well known as the author of Parimala, a commentary on the Brahma Sutras, and over 100 other works, has contributed to the world, the Ratnatraya Pariksha and Durga Chandrakalastuti dealing with Devi Upasana. Even Bhaskaracharya refers to Dikshita in the honorific plural. Other well known Upasakas include Muttuswamy Dikshitar and Sri Shyama Shastry, two of the trinity of Carnatic classical music. Their lyrics disclose an intimate and deep knowledge of the Upasana Krama.

The famous and great personalities mentioned above would not have followed the Srividya path if it were contrary to the Vedas. This thought itself would be of comfort, but some readers may still wish to have some reassurance by way of references to relevant Vedic texts. Some such proofs are given below:

1. The srisukta, as its very name indicates, hymns the Goddess, invoking her as Sri. The Kamakala Bija is explicitly stated in this Sukta. Other texts also describe the great Bija as follows: YaH praNI ti ya IM shruNoti yadIM shruNotyakalaM shruNoti etc.
2. The Durga Sukta hymns the Goddess as Sri Durga.
3. The Kenopanishad states that Uma revealed herself to Indra and dispelled his vanity and ignorance.
4. Parameshwara is worshipped as Ambikapati and Umapati in the Rigveda –

**namo hiraNyabAhave hiraNyavarNAya hiraNyarUpAya hiraNyapataye
ambikApataye umApataye pashupataye namo namaH.**

5. The presiding deity to whom oblations are offered in the Avahanti Homa is Sri Annapurana, a manifestation of Sri Mahatripurasundari.
6. There are also the following Upanishads dealing with Srividya – Sundari Tapini Pancjakam, Bhavanopanishad, Ratrisukta, Devisukta, Devyupanishad, Tripuropanishad, Bahvrchopanishad, Kaulopanishad, Guhyopanishad,

Mahopanishad, Saraswati Rahasyopanishad, Saubhagya Lakshmi Upanishad, Srichakropanishad etc.

A modern writer Sri Panchanana Tarkaratna Bhattacharya has written a commentary on the Brahma sutras interpreting them from the standpoint of Shakta philosophy. The same author appears to have interpreted the Bhagavad Gita similarly.

There are three interesting thoughts while observing the India map, which appears approximately as a triangle. Hence the country itself is of the form of Kamakala. From Kanyakumari at the tip of the peninsula, where there is a shrine for Bala Tripurasundari, right up to the Himalayas, there are many holy shrines where Devi is worshipped in different forms, providing a unifying thread. At the Vaishnavi shrine in Jammu, we see only three stones representing the three Bindus of Kamakala. The Tamil script contains a vowel of the three Bindu form. Sage Agastya is a well-known Srividya Upasaka. Lord Subrahmanya is the son of Shiva and Shakti, sprung to annihilate evil or Avidya and is represented by two intersecting triangles, signifying the concept of Kamakala. All these add credence to the traditional belief that Lord Subrahmanya gifted the Tamil language to the southerners, through sage Agastya.

The Shabda Brahman, an aspect of chit, is the Kundalini Shakti. The Shakti is subtle and in the form of mere light and not audible. From Moolaadhaara, her breath goes upward and becomes Pashyanti (associated with Manas), Madhyama (associated with Buddhi) and Vaikhari. Thence it is generated as the letters a to ksha. These letters combine to form words and mantras. The Sadhaka has to realize that the Devata is not merely a syllable or a word and its meaning, but as a great power of which the mantra is a notation. The letters have specific meanings in the mantra Shastra and hence a mantra can be viewed as a coded form of conveying a long message or prayer. The Sadhaka must realize that he, his Guru, the mantra, the Chakra and the Devata are all one.

The Kundalini Shakti is coiled like a serpent around a Karnika in the Moolaadhaara and is normally dormant, with its head on top of the Karnika. The Sadhaka's aim is to awaken the Kundalini, lead her through the six Chakras, and unite her with Sadashiva in the Sahasrara. Nectar flows from such union and drenches all the Nadis, and the Sadhaka experiences great bliss. Kundalini at first does not stay very long in the Sahasrara. The length of the stay depends on the strength of the Sadhaka's practice. There is a natural tendency to return to Moolaadhaara but the Sadhaka will use his efforts to retain her at the Sahasrara. Liberation is got only

when she takes up her permanent abode at the Sahasrara. The unknown can be explained only through the known. An example that readily comes to mind is the Ananda Mimamsa in the Taittiriya Upanishad. Arousing the Kundalini can be done through either Hatha Yoga or through meditation and Japa, done over many years. This should not be forced or hurried. The grace of the Guru is absolutely necessary. The latter method i.e. by meditation and Japa is safer. While taking Kundalini through the Chakras, the Sadhaka should mentally offer worship at each of the Chakras.

Arousing the Kundalini by mantra Japa should be done only in the Shukla paksha. It cannot be sufficiently emphasized that arousing the Kundalini should be attempted only by a person with total self-control, through sincere and constant Japa done with devotion over many years and with the specific approval of the Guru. to do otherwise may cause dangerous consequences and lead to several physical and mental ailments. The advice of the Paramacharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham should be carefully heeded in this respect.

As this Vidya is the means of both Bhoga and Moksha, it is taught secretly only to eligible persons. The practitioner is also enjoined to keep this Upasana secret. The Sruti says:

AntaH shAktaH bahiH shaivaH loke vaiShNavaH.

The Shakti Upasana should be known only to the mind and not broadcast. Even while wearing on the forehead the Sindura Prasadam of Devi, the Upasaka should cover it with bhasma. As Shiva and Shakti are one, this can be done. Likewise, in view of statements such as 'mAmeva paurushaM rUpaM gopikAnayanAmR^itam', 'kadAchit laliteshAnI pumrUpA kR^iShNaviGraha' etc., indicating Abheda between Ambika and Narayana, discoursing at gatherings on Bhagavan's greatness amounts to discoursing on Devi's greatness.

It has been said that all Dvijas are Shaktas since they chant the Gayathri mantra. The Tripura Tapini Upanishad establishes the equivalence of each Koota of Panchadashi mantra with the Gayathri mantra. Chanting the Panchadashi mantra once is equivalent to chanting the Gayathri mantra thrice. The aspirant who decides to take up this Upasana must be sincere, devoted, of good character, hailing from a good family, pure in mind, keen on attaining the Purusharthas. A good shishya is one who has studied the Vedas and the Upanishads, but is unable to retain their true import in this mind, and wishes to practice this Upasana as a means of attaining Brahma

Jnana. Such a shishya must seek a Guru. The importance of Guru has been stressed in all Shastras. Upadesha becomes effective only if it is learnt from a Guru; merely reading from books will be unproductive, and will even cause misery. The shishya should surrender to a Guru and pray for enlightenment. The relationship between the Guru and the shishya is a sacred one. The Guru will also test the shishya, put him through a probationary period, and if he is convinced that the shishya is a fit and proper person, will instruct him. Unfortunately, nowadays we find that imparting Srividya mantra Upadesha has become a matter of commerce. Srividya is being taught as a year's crash course! This is to be deplored. In fact, the learned commentator Rameshwara Suri, in the course of his commentary on the Parashurama Kalpasutras, quotes this verse:

**guravo bahavaH santi shishyavittApahArakAH |
durlabhoyaM gurudevi shishyasantApahArakAH ||**

One should look for Guru who rids shishya of his ignorance, not wealth. Due to the grace of a proper Guru, all the obstacles and inconveniences of the shishya in acquiring Brahma Jnana are destroyed. By constantly chanting the mantra taught to him, the shishya overcomes all misery and enjoys supreme bliss. The Shishya's duties include serving the Guru to the best of his ability, having total faith in the Guru and chanting the mantra taught to him constantly. In Srividya, the guru shishya lineage has come as an unbroken chain, starting from the first guru, Paramashiva. At the time of Diksha, the Guru will teach the Guru Paduka mantra. The shishya is taught about his immediate Guru, his Guru's Guru and his Guru. The Shishya should develop the attitude that the Guru's feet rest on his head, the Paramaguru's feet on the Guru's head and so on. The Guru Paduka mantra contains the letters Ham saH, which represents the breathing in and breathing out, happening subconsciously all the time. This is known as the Ajapa Gayathri. Ha denotes Paramashiva and sa denotes Parashakti. This mantra therefore teaches the identity of Shiva and Shakti. The Paduka mantra also has the words ShivaH and Soham. It will be readily seen that Soham is the same as HamsaH, read in reverse order. These three words occur in all the three Guru Paduka mantras, in different permutations and serve to confirm the identity of Shiva and Shakti. Further, their relevance as regarding the Mahavakyas has been already explained. The mantras also include Tritari or the Vimarsha Pranava, Bala, and 12 Bijas in two groups of four and eight. The four are known as Khechari and the eight as Ananda Bhairava or Navanatha Bijas. Their meanings are highly esoteric and should be learnt from a Guru. The two other Rahasya Bijas in these mantras denote the Turiya Pranava, connoting the effulgence of the Supreme Being.

A very exacting daily routine has been prescribed for the sincere and committed Srividya Upasaka, covering all activities from the time of waking up early in the morning until retiring to bed at night. Their purpose is to make the Sadhaka constantly meditate on the Shiva swaroopa even while engaged in other actions. The routines prescribed for the Sadhaka include Dhyana of the Guru, Pranayama, Divyamangala Dhyana, Rashmi Mala, Ajapa Samarpanam, Ablutions, Sandhya Vandana and different kinds of Parayanams such as Natha, Ghatika, Tatva, Tithi Nitya, Nama and Mantra Parayanams. Devi Upasakas narrate the time according to the ashtanga system. As regards to Japa, it should be noted that the mantra of each Devata can be chanted only at the time prescribed for it. For example, the mantra of Maha Ganapathi has to be chanted early in the morning, that of Shyamala in the afternoon and that of Varahi at night.

A question may arise, why are there so many Devatas? These are only aspects of the Parashakti and, to adopt the contemporary management jargon, have jurisdiction over certain areas. Within these, the Devatas have been delegated authority and responsibility and have been empowered to deal with the prayers of the devotees. When the occasion arises, Parashakti can withdraw these aspects into Herself. The Sadhaka must also clearly appreciate that Japa corresponds to the Manana and Nidhidhyasana prescribed in regard to the Upanishads. While chanting Srividya Maha mantra, for greater efficacy, the Sadhaka should try to keep in mind the meanings of the mantra, and pronounce the letters in the manner explained by Sri Bhaskaracharya in Varivasya Rahasya. The Sadhaka may also contemplate on the Shakti in each of the Adharas while doing the Japa, and gradually move her upwards over a period of time.

The Sadhaka will experience, as his Japa and Upasana progress, that he is able to get some supernatural powers, Siddhis as they are known. His mind will also be distracted by various material pleasures thrusting themselves upon him. He must be careful, remembering parokShapriya hi devaH and these are directed at preventing him from attaining his goal of Brahma Jnana.

As we started with Maha Ganapathi, we should also end with another manifestation known as ucchishta Ganapathi. It has been suggested that the name should be Utkrishta Ganapathi instead. Sri Chidanandanatha taught the mantra of this form of Ganapathi only to a select few of his vast number of disciples, and this Upasana is restricted to very few. In the secret Sahasranama of this form of Ganapathi, various important aspects of Srividya Upasana are mentioned. We are grateful that we have

been allowed access to this. It has been recorded that His Holiness Sri Sacchidananda Shivabhinava Nrisimha Bharati Mahaswamigal of Sringeri Sarada Peetham discoursed in private to Sri Chidanandanatha for more than half an hour, on the meaning of the last two names of this Sahasranama, relating them to the Asparsha Yoga stated in the Mandukya Karika.

As the Phala Sruti of Sri Lalita Sahasranama says, only the person who in crores of births and deaths has sung the names of other deities will develop sincerity and interest in singing the names of Mahatripurasundari. Only in the last Janma, one becomes a Srividya Upasaka. Those who have earned this through their Tapas in many Janmas, will enter this Upasana Marga.

Bhoga-Moksha Pradayini

For all the mahAvidyA goddesses, there is an associated Bhairava or Shiva, whose upAsana is considered mandatory by some sources. The Bhairavas for the ten mahAvidyA-s are:

kAlI - mahAkAla bhairava

tripurasundarI – laliteshvara bhairava (or tripureshvara bhairava)

tArA - akShobhya bhairava

ChinnamastA - karAla bhairava (or krodha bhairava)

bhuvaneshvarI - mahAdeva bhairava

dhUmAvatI - kAla bhairava (or ghora bhairava)

Mahalakshmi - nArAyaNa bhairava (or sadAshiva bhairava)

tripura bhairavI – vaTuka bhairava

mAtangI - matanga bhairava

bagalAmukhI - mrityunjaya bhairava

**strImantro bhogadaH proktaH pumantro mokShadaH param |
ubhayopAsanaM devi bhuktimuktipradAyakam ||**

upAsana of mahAvidyA grants bhoga and when done along with the corresponding Bhairava/Shiva, grants Bhoga and Moksha.

**kevalaM yo japechAktaM manuM shaivaM na yojayet |
janmakoTishu japtO.api na manuH siddhibhAg bhavet ||**

Without the upAsana of the respective Bhairava/Shiva, reciting the female mahAvidyA alone does not grant one Mantra Siddhi. However, in the case of Srividya, the mantra is both a mantra and a vidya as it is shiva-shaktyAtmaka:

Ka-trayaM ha-dwayaM chaiva shaivo bhAgAH prakIrtaH etc.

Thus, among the Dasha Mahavidyas, the need for reciting a separate mantra for Tripureshwara Bhairava is eliminated for Sundari as Srividya itself denotes both Shiva and Shakti. Umanandanatha prescribes kAmeswara mantra as an anga for mahAShoDashi but this is not in line with Kalpasutras, which has no mention of this mantra. This mantra seems to be present only in trikUTA rahasya, an appendix to Rudra Yamala, which is not a standard Sri-Kula Tantra. Moreover, the Rajarajeshwari Parishishtha and Shodashi Prakarana of the same Yamala has no mention of KAmeswara Mantra. Also owing to the fact that trikUTA Rahasya is solely addressing vAma mArgi-s (kApAlika-s and kShapaNaka-s in particular), others can safely neglect this mantra and Umanandanatha's prescription, which is not in accordance with the Kalpasutra. Again, the same rule applies for hAdi vidyA as well. Though Devata for hAdi vidyA is mahA kAmeshvara bhaTTAraka, the mantra, like kAdi, is again shiva-shaktyAtmaka (pramANa is from hAdi mata and vAmakeshwara tantra) and thus, the need for a separate kAmeshvarI mantra is eliminated. As Srividya is shiva-shaktyAtmaka, it grants both Bhoga Moksha by upAsana of one single mantra. Hence, bhoga moksha pradAttrva of Srividya is highlighted among the ten mahAvidyAs. However, even other mahAvidyAs can be considered shiva-shaktyAtmaka by the presence of mAya bIja - which is ubhayAtmaka. This however does not apply to dhUmAvatI, where the mAya bIja is missing, indicating mithuna-hinatva. Hence, some Sampradayas do not insist on the mandatory upAsana of the corresponding Bhairava.

Guru/svashAstra is the final authority here.

Adhikara Bheda

There is ample pramANa on whether a Dvija can follow vAmAchAra (any of its five sub-streams). From those pramANa-s, it can be safely concluded, Brahmana cannot follow vAmAchAra – period.

Brihad Badabanala Tantra –

brAhmaNA kShatriyA vaishyA dakShamArgAdhikAriNaH
dwijavarjAstrayo varNA vAmakaulAdhikAriNaH |
dakShamArgaparibhraShTo brAhmaNo vAmamArgagaH
ihaiva siddhimApnoti nApavargaM kadAchana ||
vedamArgaparityAgI kaivalyecChAvivarjitaH
siddhikAmI vAmamArgI brAhmaNo nArakI bhavet ||

Daksha Marga is prescribed for the Sadhakas belonging to first three Varnas. However, except those belonging to the first Varna, rest are qualified for Vama and Kaula Margas. A Brahmana can achieve lower Siddhis but not Kaivalya through Vama Marga. If he does practice Vamachara, he attains the hell.

Tantraraja Tantra –

vedamARgaM parityajya tantramArgaikatatparaH
brAhmaNa nirayaM bhuktva bhaveyurbrahmarAkShasAH |
vaidikaM tAntrikaM mArgaM dakShiNaM brAhmaNashcharan
iha siddhIshwaro bhUtvA dehAnte.amR^itamashnute ||

One who gives up the Veda and adopts Vama Marga, such a Brahmana attains the state of a Brahma Rakshasa after death. Only by following Daksha Marga, approved by the Sruti and Smrti [pramANa is Devi Bhagavata Purana – which is a mahApurANa], one attains siddhi here and thereafter.

Rudrayamala –

brAhmaNAnAM vAmamArgo narakAyaiva jAyate

Kalika Purana –

**Yo dAkShiNyAM vinA vipro mahAmAyAM prapUjayet
Sa pApaH swargalokAttu chyuto bhavati rogadhR^ik |**

A Vipra who worships Mahamaya in ways other than Dakshinachara, loses the heaven and attains disease.

Meru Tantra –

shUdrAdi yavanAntAnAM siddhirvAmapathe sthita |

For those belonging to the fourth Varna or lower, the prescribed path is Vamachara. This is indicative of prAshastya of Daksha Marga even for the second and third Varnas.

Mahakala Samhita –

vAmAdina yajecChUdro dakShiNena dwijAtayaH |

One belonging to the fourth Varna should worship according to the leftist path whereas the rest (DwijAtayaH- the first three Varnas) should adopt the Dakshina Marga.

Siddhantasara –

brAhmaNyahAnihetutvAt kulAchAraM na chA.acharet |

As Brahmanya is lost by following Kulachara, one should not tread this path.

Kaulikagama –

**brahmavIryAM tathA kShetraM saMskArA brahmasambhavAH
brAhmaNAcharaNAdbrahmavidyAbhiH brAhmaNo bhavet |
lakShaNatrayahIno yastantramArgeNa siddhyati
chaturlakShaNahInAnAM mArgAH syuH kaulikadayaH ||**

Birth, Samskara, Behavior and Brahma Vidya are the lakshanas for a Brahmana. One who is devoid of these should adopt paths like Kaula etc.

Tanrantare-

**vAmamArgastitho naraH tulasIM na kvachit spR^ishet
na spR^ishedvaiShNavaM vipraM praNamenna cha vaidikam |**

A Vama margi should never touch Tulasi, a Vaishnava or respect a Vaidika (in essence the Veda). These rules, especially the last one, are not acceptable to a Vaidika.

It is a misconception that Vamachara is not practiced among the Vaishnavas. The ten chief classes of Vaishnavas are: Vaikhanasa, Radhavallabha, Gaukulesha, Vrindavani, Pancharatra, Viravaishnava, Ramanandi, Harivyasi, Nimbarka and Bhagavata. Among these, Gaukulesha, Vrindavani etc are leftist paths. Shiavas again are classified into Sapta Pashupatas – Shikhi, Mundi, Jati, Dwidandi, Tridandi, Ekadandi and Virashaiva, where some are leftist paths.

Rudrayamala –

**upAsanA tridhA prokta shreShThA tatra tu sAttviki
tasyAM cha mAnasau pUjAjapau mukhyatamau smR^itau |
rAjaso dakShiNo mArgaH pratimAyAM prapUjanam
bAhyopachAraiH puShpAdyaiH tadAdyAnAM vishiShyate |
tAmasopAsanaM proktaM pIThAdau balidAnataH
vAmamArgeNa tacchAdyaM varNaM hitvA prashasyate ||**

There are three kinds of upAsanA: Satviki, Rajasi and Tamasi. Satviki is Samayachara involving pure mental worship. Rajasi is Dakshinachara involving worship in a external Yantra or Vighraha according to rites prescribed by Sruti, Smrti and Agama. Tamasi is Vamachara involving rites like Bali etc, which is not prescribed for the first Varna.

The pramANas quoted are from Tantras which treat all paths equally, or lean more towards the leftist paths. In all the above cases, whenever we say vAmAchAra, it should be read to include vAmAdi panchaka: the five leftist paths: Kaula, Vama, china, Siddhanta and Shabara. So, it becomes clear that a Dwija has to stick to Dakshinachara and gradually progress towards Samayachara. All the other pramANas praising Vamachara are restricted to those tantras alone and should be applied only within the context of those Tantras and for those who are qualified for such practices.

Again as Sri Bhaskararaya quotes:

**kaulikaM kurvataH karma vaidikaM nA.abhidhlyate |
virodhAdubhayaM naShTaM tasmAdekapathA charet ||**

Follow one path – either Vaidika/Dakshinachara or Kaulika. Trying to mix both results in no good and negate each other.

**vAmamArgI yadA dakShaM pravishettatsuraiH sa tu
vighnyate pIDyate chApi na siddhimadhigacChati |
dakShamArgI yadA vAmaM pravishettatsurAstathA
lokadwayAddhApayanti taM grasanti cha vAminam |
tasmAt swakulamArgaM tu j~nAtvA kuryAdupAsanam ||**

Vamachari entering the path of Dakshinachara or vice versa – result in Siddhi hAni. Hence, according to the instructions of a Sadguru – who is well-versed in the shAstras and whose experience of the truth is in line with the scriptures (this way we know one is not hallucinating), the qualifications of a Shishya are assessed and he is led in the right path.

shrImAtastripurArisundari shive mAm pAhi mInAmbike

Kadi - Hadi – Sadi

Enlightenment about differences between kadi, hadi and sadi vidyas?

In essence, there is no difference between kAdi, hAdi or sAdi as all three refer to the same brahma vastu called srl lalitA.

1. kAdi was taught by Sri Manmatha [sadAshiva – nArayaNa – Hayagriva – Agastya - Shankara bhagavatpAda etc are the Gurus], hAdi by Bhagavati Lopamudra [Parameshwara – Parashakti – Lopamudra – Kalatapanandanatha etc. are the Gurus] and sAdi by Sri Krodha Bhattaraka Durvasa Deshikendra [Mahadeva – Rudra – Durvasa – Dharmacharya etc are the Gurus].
2. kAdi invokes kAmeswarAmka sthitA Kameswari, hAdi invokes Kameswari vibhUshitAnko kAmeswaraH and sAdi invokes kAmakAmeswarau shivau. In fact, Shadanvaya Shambhavi Krama described by Acharya in Saundaryalahari is chiefly for sAdi upAsakas. The subtle differences in these three visualizations should be learnt directly from one's Sadguru.
3. kAdi and hAdi panchadashi-s transform to laghu shodashi and maha/parA/guhyas shodashi-s (in case of kAdi) and shuddha/hamsa shodashis (in case of hAdi). There is no shodashi in sAdi karma but the transformation is into saptadashI. Further, in the final step of karma system, all the three paths merge into aShTAdashaksharI.
4. Anga devatas differ for the three vidyas.
5. The guru mandalas are different for the three. Oghatraya for kAdi and hAdi are well-known. Apart from its own oghatraya, paraugha, parAparaugha, aparaugha are worshipped in sAdi krama.

The best example of peaceful co-existence of hAdi and kAdi seems to be the household of Sri Agastya and Bhagavati Lopamudramba, who respectively were worshippers of kAdi and hAdi vidyas. Sri Kamakshi Mahabhattacharika is the confluence of the three chief vidyas as she was worshipped by Agastya, Lopamudra and Durvasa.

gurumUrte tvAm namami kamAkShi

Sabija Srichakra

shrImAtre namaH

Kalpasutra do not approve of writing bija-s in Srichakra at all. However, going by the rule anukramanyato grAhyam etc., one should grasp what is unsaid in Kalpasutra, from elsewhere. Moreover, Kalpasutra is mukhya pramANa only to dAkShiNAtya-s of some sampradAya-s and is not acceptable to many lineages who accept only 64 Tantras as pramANa. It is said in rudrayAmala:

**bljAkSharayutaM chakraM yatInAmuttamottamam |
bljAksharavihInaM tug R^ihasthAnAm prashasyate ||**

Srichakra with bljAkshara-s inscribed, is prescribed only for Yati-s or Sanyasin-s. For others, (the term Grhastha here should be interpreted to collectively represent the first three Asrama-s), yantra without bljAkshara-s is prescribed. Of course, these considerations are for those who use Srichakra for nitya pUjA and upAsanA and not for those who perceive Srichakra as a 'new age tool' used as a 'desktop decorative' or a 'healing crystal' or an 'energized vastu correction object'!

However, it is also said:

bljam vinA cha nirjIvam bhavatyeva na samshayaH |

Without correctly inscribing the appropriate blja-s, the Srichakra is said to be lifeless.

Great upAsakas like Brahmasri Tadeballi Raghava Narayana Shastrigal and Sri Tettiur Subrahmanya Shastrigal have advised their disciples not to have a sabIja yantra at home for worship as such a Yantra is extremely powerful to handle. First of all, it is pure nonsense as to how people sell 'energized' Yantras these days as the moment correct geometry of Srichakra is achieved, the presence of Devi occurs without the requirement for any additional samskAra-s [nityaM sannihitA devI]. The above doSha of lifelessness due to lack of inscribed bljAkShara-s is overcome by performing a prANapratishThA [in case of pUjA Yantras] every day during pUjA. The ritual of AvahanA done every day is just a mere formality. The inscription of blja-s is however considered necessary for pratiShThA or sthira Yantras. However, when instructed by Sadguru or Sampradaya, sabIja Srichakra can be used by an uttamAdhikAri during mahayAga krama [ashTashTaka or saubhAgya kalpadruma

paddhati-s]. the instructions for inscribing the blja-s can be obtained from 36th Chapter of Rudrayamala and from Tantraraja:

**kamalaM parilupya madhyamAnyat
sarvashAmldiyutaM sabindunAdam |
nigamAdi namo.antare virAjat
bhuvi devI hR^idayapratiShThametata || etc.**

Mudra Prakasha

Mudras form an important part of Upasana and incorrect usage of Mudras angers the Yoginis. Mudras should never be displayed except in the presence of Srichakra and Sri Guru.

Also, Mudras should never be displayed in front of a non-initiate. These days, gullible aspirants are taught mere finger-twisting in the name of the Mudras which does not confirm with the scriptures. The answer for any enquiry regarding the shAstra pramANa is – ‘this is what is followed in our sampradAya’. Every sat-sampradAya derives its practices from valid shAstras held as pramANa by the Acharyas of that particular lineage. The interpretation of the accepted pramANa is where one needs to consult teachings particular to one’s sampradAya. Teachings which do not have shAstra pramANa cannot be characterized as sAmpradAyika and those following such pseudo-practices can only be referred to as belonging to an apa-sampradAya. For those who do not belong to these pseudo neo apasampradaya-s, here is a collection of Mudras from various scriptures and also the correct interpretation of these Mudras as detailed by great scholars like Sri Bhaskararaya, Sri Maheshwaranadanatha, Sri Purnanandanatha etc. A general guideline while examining those Mudras which are described differently in different Tantras would be to give priority to that pramANa which is more acceptable to one’s Guru sampradAya. Also, aspects such as whether the tantra belongs to shrIkula or kAlIkula, if the pramANa is peculiar to shaiva, shAkta, vaiShNava krama-s etc. need to be considered.

Dasa Mudras

The significance of *mudras* was dealt vividly in *Nityahridaya*.

Mudras are to be taught by the Guru and they may differ as per sampradaya (*sampradaya bheda*).

Mudras are positions of fingers practised in worship.

There are 10 *mudras* that are used in the worship of **Sri Yantra**.

The ten *Mudras* are from *Sarva-Samkshobhini* to *Sarva-Trikhanda* and they are the means by which the *Tripurasundari* is worshiped as enunciated in the *Nityahridaya*.

Traditionally right hand and fingers is taken to represent the **prakasa** principle and the left represents the **vimarsa** aspect of the Brahman principle.

The dormant volition in the Brahman principle to evolve as many could materialize by the transgression of *prakasa* and *vimarsa* (*kama-kala*).

The triad of *sakti* in the form of *vama-jyestha-roudri* (when unified is *ambika-sakti*) are taken to represent the *prakasa* aspect of *Siva* and are represented by the digits of the right hand while applying these *mudras*.

Similarly the triad of *sakti* in the form of *iccha-jnana-kriya* (when unified is *santa-sakti*) are taken to represent the *vimarsa* aspect of *sakti* and are represented by digits of the left hand.

While presenting the *mudra* there is joining of the fingers of both the hands connoting the absolute volition and the consequential cosmic evolution of names and forms.

Iccha matram prabho sristih -sruti.

The presentation of these *mudras* is as per **Bharati sampradaya**.

Sarva Samkshobini Mudra



Step 1



Step 2



Sarva Samkshobhini Mudra

Ambika-sakti is the principle cause for evolution.

It is said that *parameswari* motivated *parameswara* to take up the task of universal creation.

Parameswari srityonmukhena ksobhayatiti kshobhini.-Vishnu Purana

The *mudra-devi* is perused as pervading the *trilokyamohana* enclosure (the deluder of three realms) of **Sri Chakra**.

Dram is the seed letter with which this *mudra* is identified.

This *mudra* is presented by joining and pointing, the pointing (tarjani) and middle (madhyama) fingers of both hands and holding the remaining fingers closely together as shown in the above photographs.

Sarva-Vidravini mudra



Sarva-Vidravini mudra:

Ambika is identified as the triad of *vama-jyesta-roudri*. While *vama* is the creative aspect, *jyesta* strives to sustain the universe that is created.

Drim is the *bija* mantra of this *mudra*, which pervades the *sarva-asaparipuraka* (fulfiller of all hopes) enclosure of **Sri Chakra**.

This *mudra* is presented by pointing, the pointing (tarjani) and middle (madhyama) fingers of both hands and holding the remaining fingers closely together as shown in the above photographs.

Sarva-Akarsini mudra



Sarva-Akarsini mudra:

This denotes the active Brahman principle (*kameswara*) diversifying into duality. The principle of *chaitya* (transformed state of *Vimarsa*) is suggested by this *mudra*.

Klim is the *bija* mantra of this *mudra*, which pervades the *sarvasamkshobana* (agitator of all) enclosure of ***Sri Chakra***.

This *mudra* is presented by pointing, the middle (*madhyama*) fingers of both hands and holding the remaining fingers closely together as shown in the above photographs

Sarva-vasamkari mudra



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



Sarva-vasamkari mudra:

This is also known as *sarva-avesakari*. It represents the eminent effulgence within (*daharakasa*) of the seeker experiencing *siva-sakti* unison and equanimity.

Blum is the bija mantra of this *mudra* extending the *sarvasoubhagyadayaka* (provider of all prosperity) enclosure of **Sri Chakra**.

This *mudra* is presented by joining and holding the fingers of both the hands together as shown in the above photographs.

Sarva- unmadini mudra



Step 1



Sarva- unmadini mudra:

Sarva-ardhasadhaka (accomplisher of all objectives) enclosure of **Sri-Chakra** is the abode of this *mudra sakti*. As explained in *mahanarayanopanishad* this *mudra sakti* occupies the *daharakasa* (space of the heart) of the seeker as a tongue of Fire, as slender as the awn of a paddy grain (*nivara-suka*), blessing him with *brahma chaitanya*.

Sah is the *bija* of this *mudra-sakti* dominated by *jyestha sakti* principle.

This mudra is presented by joining and holding thumb (*angustha*), pointing finger (*tarjani*), middle finger (*madhyama*) and the little fingers (*kanishtika*) of both hands facing up and pointing the ring fingers (*amamika*) together as shown in the above photographs.

Sarva-mahankusa mudra



Step 1



Step 2



Sarva-mahankusa mudra:

Krom is the *bija* mantra of this *mudra* extending the whole of *sarva-raksakara* (protector of all) enclosure of **Sri Chakra**.

This *mudra sakti* dawns on the seeker the incomparable effulgence of *vamasakti* (*vamat vama*; the *emitor* of cosmos).

This *mudra* is presented by joining and holding thumb (*angustha*), pointing finger (*tarjani*), middle finger (*madhyama*) and the little fingers (*kanishtika*) of both hands facing up and bending the ring fingers (*amamika*) upwards together as shown in the above photographs.

Sarva-khechari mudra



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



Sarva-khecari mudra:

Indecisive seeker may derelict in his *nitya* and *naimittika* duties. By this *mudra* the seeker acknowledges the eminent aspect of *jnana-sakti* and dissolves all doubts impeding his spiritual persuasion

Hasakhapharem is the *bija* mantra of this *mudra* and *sarva-roghahara* (remover of all diseases) enclosure of ***Sri Chakra*** is embellished by this *mudra sakti*.

This mudra is presented by entwining right hand over the left hand and holding the hands sky ward and presenting sarva yoni mudra as shown in the above photographs.

Sarva-bija mudra



Step 1



Step 2



Sarva-bija mudra:

This *mudra sakti* pervades and extends the inner most *trikona* (*sarvasiddhiprada*-bestower of all attainments) enclosure of **Sri Chakra**.

Hasoum is the *bija* mantra of this *mudra sakti*. This facilitates an enquiry in the mind of the seeker for realizing the primordial *satya-brahman* principle.

With this *mudra-sakti* the seeker successfully realizes the contaminated perception of the pseudo reality of *maya* principle.

This *mudra* is presented by joining and holding the fingers tips of both hands in a circle as shown in the above photographs.

Sarva-yoni mudra



Step 1



Sarva-yoni mudra:

Sarva-anandamaya (filled with all Bliss) enclosure of **Sri Chakra** is the abode of this *mudra-sakti*. This is also known by the name *kama kala*. *Kama* suggests the proactive Brahman principle (*sabala brahma*) which is as slender as the (*iksana*) with a resolve to expand; *kala* implies the infinite empirical universe unfolded from *kameswara*.

Prakasa-vimarsa aspects of *siva-sakti* fill this enclosure.

Aim is the *bija* mantra of this *mudra sakti* that is saving the seeker from the consequential deficiencies arising out of the errors of omission and commission in his approach for self-realization.

This mudra is presented by joining and holding folding both the little fingers (*kanishtika*) upwards, holding the ring finger of the right hand on that of the left hand and hold them with the pointing fingers(*tarjani*), joining the middle fingers (*madhyama*) and joining the thumbs (*angusta*) and little fingers (*kanishtika*) pointing downwards as shown in the above photographs.

Sarva- trikhanda mudra



Step 1



Step 2



Sarva- trikhanda mudra:

Trikhanda suggests the three parts of *Srividya* mantra, signifying the principles of the Sun, the Moon and the Fire. The *mudra* also is an invitation for the rays of light of the all pervading principle of *vimarsa-sakti* (*avarana-sakti*) of the celestial mother (*chidrupi*) that manifests as *brahma-visnu-rudra-isvara- sadasiva* performing five celestial duties of *srishti-sthiti-samhara-tirodhana-anugraha*.

Sarva-anandamaya enclosure, the central point of **Sri Chakra** (*Kendra bindu*) is to be perceived as the smallest circle with immeasurable diameter, the essential property of a circle is in terms of forming 360 degrees at the centre, thus making this enclosure as the perfect symbolic abode for the supreme- Empress (*srimaharajni*) in **SriChakra**.

Hasraim-hrisklim-hasrouh is the *bija* triad of this *mudra* that pervades the *sarvaanandamaya* enclosure of **Sri Chakra** a compressed circle (*bindu*) connoting the *nirguna para* Brahman principle.

This *mudra* is presented by joining and holding both the hands as in *sarva yoni mudra*, but the little fingers (*kanishtika*) are to pointing downward and the thumbs(*angusth*) pointing upward as shown in the above photographs.

Akanda mandalakaram vishvam vyaya vyavasthitam

Trailokya manditam yena mandalam tat sadasivam

--- tantraraja.

This is the invocation prayer for the *mudra* connoting the non-dual concept of the presented universe and the perceiving self. *Mandala* is the geometric expression which enables the seeker to reorganize his individual constitution (*pindanda*) to cosmic evolution (*brahmanda*).

Vishva is a compacted potential extension of basic details in all directions from the centre and can be visualised as a *mandala*. This *mandala* makes an effective model of transformation, projection; concentration and integration Vis-a Vis the individual perceiving it, thus denying the subject .object duality (*aham-idam*). In such detail of contiguity, *vishva* is construed as the objectification of Consciousness and *jiva* as the subjectification of the same Consciousness, which is *sada-siva*.

Srividya Rajagopala

shrlmAtre namaH

This is the dhyAna of Bhagavan Sri Krishna in the form of gopAla sundarl or shrIvidyA rAjagopala, where Sri Lalita and Sri Rajagopala are worshipped as one with a mantra that is a combination of Srividya and Rajagopala ashTAdashAkSharI.

There are two approaches to the worship of this mantra, one taught by hiraNyagarbha to dakShiNACHarins and the other taught by Bhagavan Anandabhairava to the vAmAcharins. The Rishi, Chandas, dhyAna, AvaraNa etc vary in these two systems.

In the case of dakShiNACHara again, there are two forms of this vidyA, one called gopAlasundarl or madanagopAlasundarl and the other called shrIvidyA rAjagopAla or madana gopAla kRShNa. Both these are combinations of shrIvidyA and rAjagopala mantras. Though these two terms are used inter-changeably, they are different. This is pointed out clearly in gopAlasundarl kalpa of Rudrayamala.

In the case of gopAla sundarl, the primary mantra is shrIvidyA, and rAjagopAla mantra is complimentary to the former. The visualization of Lord in this form is half-male and half-female [somewhat like Ardhanariswara]:

”I meditate on that splendid Brahman in the form of Sri Krishna, who is half red [aruNa varNa or the color of the rising sun - this is the left half signifying Sri Lalitambika] and half blue [of the color of a dark cloud - this is the right half signifying Sri Gopala], decorated on the forehead by a peacock feather, who is both male and female in form [Ardhanariswara swarUpa], and who sports in his hands: flute, pAsha, ankusha, sugarcane bow and arrow of flowers”. Thus, an identity between Sridevi and Srihari is indicated.

In the case of shrIvidyA rAjagopala or madana gopAla, the Lord sports the Ayudhas of Sridevi, has a red complexion like her but is male in form. Here is the perfect materialization of the phrase “pumrUpA krShNavigraha” – “When in male form, I am Sri Krishna”. Also, rAjagopAla mantra is primary in this case.

***kodaNDamaikShavamakhaNDamishum cha pauShpam
chakraBjapAshasRNikAnchanavamshanALam |***

***vibhrANamaShTavidhabAhubhirarkavarNam
dhyAyedddharim madanagopavilAsaveSham || [Sri Krishna Karnamritam]***

”I meditate on Sri Madana Gopala, who is of the complexion of the rising sun, and who sports in his eight hands: sugarcane bow, arrow of flowers, sudarshana chakra, gadA, lotus flower, pAsha, ankusha and golden flute”.

The same is described below:

***prasUnabANAmkitamikShuchApam
chakrAbjapAshAnkushapanchanaLam |
dharam karairaShTabhirarkavarNam
shrIkShNarUpam praNamAmi rAmam || [Sri Rama Karnamritam]***

'Sri Krishna, in his form as Srividya Rajagopala, is sporting bow [of sugarcane] and arrow [of flowers]. Now, are not these trademarks of Sri Ramachandra? So, this form of Lord indeed is non-different from my beloved Sri Ramabhadra! Hence, I offer my namaskramas to Sri Raghunayaka, who appears in the form of Madana Gopala'.

Technically however, it should be noted that there is a separate form of the Lord known as shrIvidyA rAma:

”I visualize on a throne of the form of Srichakra, with Garuda forming the Bindu, seated is Sri Rama, sporting jnAna mudrA in his right hand. He embraces with his left hand, Bhagavati Sita seated on his left lap, who in turn is sporting a lotus in her lotus hands. By meditating on this form of Rama and by reciting his mantra, one can realize the unity between the self and the Brahman”.

From the shrIvidyA perspective, these three mantras, along with mahA vaikuNTheshwara [mahAgopAla pradhAna] and shrIchakradhara [shrIvidyA pradhAna], form the vaiShNava angas of parA ShoDashI.

krShNam bhaje shyAmlam

Oghatraya and Ardhanariswara

shrlmAtre namaH

In guru mandala pooja, one of the maanavaugha gurus is leelaamba. But I have noticed in Sringeri Saampradaaya leelaanandanadha is used. Which is the correct version? And why do Srividyaopasakas do not give prominence to ardhanareeshwara devatha?

shrlmAtre namaH

This difference seems to be a typical pATha bheda issue. The pATha leelAnandanAtha and not leelAmbA. But I see several upAsakas, like those belonging to guhAnanda maNDali etc. using the pATha, leelAmbA.

The pATha of a passage from Rudrayamala says:

leelAnandaM namasyAmi swAtmAnandaM maheshwari |

The same, in Sri Kamakoti Shastriji's version reads:

leelAmbAM praNamasyAmi swAtmAnandaM sureshwari |

A selection from Tantraraja tantra reads:

madano bhuvano leelAH swAtmAnandastathaiva cha |

or

madano bhuvano leelA swAtmAnandastathaiva cha |

However, a clear reading can be seen in parA tantra, in the chapter describing oghatraya:

**vimalAnandanAthashcha madanAnandanAthakaH |
bhuvanAnandanAthahshcha leelAnandastataH param ||**

Also the Guhya Sahasranama of Sri Ucchishta Mahaganapati, which deals with various aspects of Sividya, reads:

leelAnandArchito leelAlabdhasarvAdhika etc.

Umanandanatha [in Nityotsava] and Jnanarnava also use the reading leelAnandanAtha.

Ardhanariswara swarUpa is celebrated by one and all, but with different names. The Sruti says: strlpumsAtmikA kAmakalaiva pratipAditA. PuNyAnandanAtha, in the celebrated kAmakalAvilAsa says, shivashaktimithunapiNDaH kabaliikrtabhuvamaNDalo jayati. Shaivas call this strlpummithuna as Ardhanariswara, vaiShNavas as lakShmInArAyaNa or ramArdhahari, gANapatyas as mahAGaNapati, lakShmIgaNapati or Sri UcchiShTa Mahaganapati; advaitins use terms such as shabala etc -

**mAyAdarshe nirviSheshAvalokAjjAto bimbaH pratyayo chidvisheSha |
AsicchaktiH puruShastriSwarUpA vidyAbaddha chediyam jaivyameti ||**

The Tantras describe guNi shaktis :

**shAmbhavi shuklarUpA cha shrIvidyA raktarUpagA |
shyAmala shyAmarUpA cha ta etA guNishaktayaH ||
[guNi shakti = guNa vishiShTa shakti – shakaparthiva karmadhAraya]**

These shaktis represent Ardhanariswara swarUpa and are reflections in the mirror of guNatraya [guNamaya prakR^itidarpanAntarvIkShyamANa pratibimbabhUtAtvAt guNishaktayaH]. When the reflection is in a mirror whose prakrti is predominantly sattva, the mithuna shakti is called shrIvidya, shyAmA or kAlikA in the case of rajo prakRti of the mirror and shAmbhavi in the case of tamo prakrti. More on this can be understood by studying shakti mImamsa sUtras and the associated bhAShya. The important aspect to note in the case of Ardhanariswara, in my opinion, would be by describing chicchakti as shivAbhinnArdhasharIrashAlinI rather than simply as shivArdhasharIravatI. Then, we can easily conclude nirupAdhika brahma to be swAbhinnachitprakAsham brahmeti.

Anga Navaka

There are only three sampradayas in Sividya and there is no dattatreya sampradaya. None of the tantras mention the three sampradayas. And clarification is Kali purvanga or uttaranga of Sividya?

taptahATakakeshAntarjwalatpAvakalochana |
vajrAdhikanakhasparSha divyasiMha namo.astute ||
pAntu vo narasiMhasya nakhalAngalakoTayaH |
hiraNyakashiporvakShaHkShetrAsR^ikkardamAruNAH ||

shrlmAtre namaH

shrlIdakShiNAmUrtiruvAcha
iyaM trikUTA shrlvidyA tripurAyAH abhiiShTadA |
kathitA sarvamantrANAM samrAjnl jagadIshvarI || 27 ||

Dakshinamurti:

"This is the great Srividya of Tripurasundari consisting of three kUTas or groups of letters, that grants all desires. She [Srividya or Sridevi due to abheda between vidyA and devatA] is described as the queen of all mantras [rAjarAjeshwarI] and as the mistress of the world [jagadIshwarI or tribhuvaneshwarI – again these are equally applicable to vidyA and devatA. The world and its inhabitants are represented by the three bhuvaneshwarI bljas, described as kUTa makuTas, signifying the three activities of srShTi - sthiti - laya [tirodhAna+anugraha] and the three states of jAgR^it - swapna - suShupti. The nAda emanating from these three mukuTas attain laya in the nAda of the turlya kUTa, represented by tri-bhuvaneshwari]. As a side note, statements glorifying Srividya should not always be treated as arthavAda. vidhi and niShedha are applicable to Tantras as well, as Tantras find their origin in dharma shastras.

AnandabhairavopAsyA dakshiNAmUrtisevitA |
iyameva mahAvidyA hayagrIvasamarchitA || [parA tantra – chaturtha paTala - 28]

kAlIi upAsanA as a part of shrlvidyA is again based on sampradAya. For most dAkShiNAtya sampradayas, kAlI is not a direct anga vidyA but one of the mantras belonging to uttarAmnAya. However, auttareya sampradayas user kAlIi as one of

the chief uttarangas of shrIvidyA, the pramANa being bhairavI tantra and tripurasundarI tantra. In this anganavaka scheme, guru chatuShTaya, gaNapati and bAlA are pUrvAngas and annapUrNA, bhuvaneshwarI, dakShiNA kAlI [durvAsa praNItA], rAjashyAmalA, mahAvArAhI and devI hR^idaya vidyA are the uttarAngas. Some think that this scheme applies to sAdi vidyA but that does not seem to be true due to two reasons. One, due to lack of pramANa in these tantras which do not even mention sAdi vidyA. Two, the uddhAra is of kAdi vidyA in these tantras.

**madyaH shaktiH shivo mAmsaM tadbhoktA bhairavaH swayam |
mudrA cha shAmbhavi sAkShAt maithunam shivachintanam ||**

Kula

gurumUrte tvAm namAmi kAmAkShi

Rahasya sahasranAma states clearly: kaulinI kulayoginI. The words kula and kaula are not restricted to mean a set of AchAraS, considered avalidika by great men. That is just one interpretation, probably more popular as that fits the fancy of many who are shishnodaraparAyaNa-s. Bhagavan Bhairava interprets the word kula and defines kulAchAra in the below fashion in mahAnirvANa tantra:

**jlvaH prakR^ititattvaM cha dikkAlAkAshameva cha |
kShityaptejo vAyavashacha kulamityabhidhyate ||**

jlva, prakR^iti, time, space and the five elements are referred to as kula.

**brahmabuddhyA nirvikalpameteShvAcharaNaM cha yat |
kulAchAraH sa evAdye dharmakAmArthamokShadaH ||**

One who realizes the Brahman in these five, giving up the bheda buddhi of seeing these separately as jlva, prakR^iti etc., such a jnAni attains puruShArtha chatuShTaya and such an AchAra is called kulAchAra. The six kamalas, starting from mUlAdhAra till AjnA, which have the above as the adhiShThAna tattvas are called kula kamalas in the microcosm. Sri pUrNAnanda paramahansa refers to shrI parameshwara as kulakamalavilAsI. Like the sun, with his rays, causes the lotus to bloom, paramashiva, in the form of shrIguru residing in the sahasrAra, through his jnAnaprakAsha, kindles brahma buddhi in tattvas like jlva, vAyu etc.

Khadgamala

Khadgamala and its significance

Khadgamala is not merely a Stotra or a hymn but is a Mala Mantra which invokes Sri Mahatripurasundari along with all her Avarana Devatas. It is a very powerful invocation. Sri Lalita Sahasranama, Sri Lalita Trishati and Sri Shuddha Mala - these are considered to be an absolute must for a Srividya Upasaka. By chanting this Mala Mantra in times which make detailed Navavarana Chakrarchana Saparya not possible, complete fruit of performing Navavarana is assured to the Sadhaka who simply chants this Mala Mantra. Several scriptures have dealt with this immensely powerful and important Mantra, Tripurarnava Tantra, Tantraraja Tantra, Vamakeshwara Tantra, Rudrayamala™s Rajarajeshwari Parishishtha, Lalita Tantra to name a few. Even Brahmanda Purana's Lalitopakhyana gives a Mala named "Sahasrakshari Vidya", on the lines of Shuddha Shakti Mala. The Mala is of five types: Sambudhyanta, Namonta, Swahanta, Tarpananta and Jayanta. By having each of these five Malas for Shiva, Shakti and Shiva - Shakti Mithuna, we end up with fifteen Malas, which along with the three Tripurasundari Mala Mantras, form the eighteen Malas of Srividya.

As per some sources, Sambudyanta is for Japa, Namonta is for Archana, Swahanta is for Homa, Tarpananta is for Tarpana and Jayanta is for Stotra. Thus, most of the things required for a Purashcharana are taken care of. Each of these fifteen Malas are also chanted one per Tithi from Pratipat to Amavasya / Pournami. There are three different sets of Rishyadi Nyasas for these Malas, based on different Tantras and Sampradaya Bhedas. Even the number of letters in each of these Malas is calculated differently based on different readings of the Malas, again due to Sampradaya Bhedas and also depending on whether the Mala is chanted for Kamya or Nishkama purpose. Patha Bhedas depend on one's own Guru Krama. It is actually wonderful if one is able to chant all the fifteen Malas everyday. The next better thing is to chant Shuddha Shakti Sambudhyanta Mala and the Mala of that particular Tithi. The last thing would be to simply recite Shuddha Shakti Sambudyanta Mala, which is considered mandatory. These Malas represent the Avarana Devatas of Srichakra and hence the Sadhaka should internally worship these Devatas in one's own Body, in the seven Chakras. This is the actual way of chanting the Mala Mantra for a Samayacharin. The exact method however is to be learnt from one's own Guru. In Saundaryalahari, in the Shloka 'kshitau', Acharya explains the secret Rashmi Krama of Srividya. The Total number of Rashmis in the bodily Chakras are 360, which

correspond to the 360 days of the physical year. Every man, who has healthy living, healthy thinking, healthy food habits i.e. living an ideal and perfect life, evolves with time. The climax of this evolution is what may be known as the state of Moksha. However, due to the difficulties in achieving perfect lifestyles as advocated by the Vedas, evolution goes on at a very slow rate, requiring crores of births for Moksha. There comes the need for techniques like Yoga and Upasana to accelerate this process of evolution.

Kriya Yogis know how to rapidly achieve the evolution of one complete year of healthy living in one day. The chanting of this Mala mantra has a similar effect. The above said shloka of Saundaryalahari can be interpreted in two ways as related to Rashmi Sankalana. One is the complicated technique of Shadanvama Shambhavakhyā Maha Mithuna Saparya, which can be performed only by Sadhakas who have received the Purnabhishekanantara Maha Shambhava Diksha. Even Mahashodashi Purna Diksha is not really sufficient to perform this Upasana. Only a Maha Shambhava Dikshita has access to this Mandala of Siddhas invoked during this worship, considered very secretive. It SHOULD not be tried unless one is done with 28 lakhs of Japa of Mahashodashi and 8 lakhs of Prasada Ashtakshari Mahavidyas. One needs to learn the procedure directly from a Guru, observe at least ten Saparyas and then start the practice himself. It may be performed only on five particular days, which again have to be known from one's own Guru. The second interpretation again speaks of Rashmis, which are same as the Avarana Devata Rashmis detailed in Khadgamala. Thus, Rashmi Sankalana may also be done by using Shuddha Shiva Shakti Mithuna Sambudhyanta Mala. Dindima, Vedananda Kavi and other great scholars have given hints with respect to these higher practices of Srividya whereas Saubhagya Kalpalata and Lalita Tantra detail the Prayogika aspects of these two Rashmi Kramas respectively. This matter was discussed here only to throw pointers at the high-end use of Khadgamala and not to encourage people to undertake these Upasana Kramas without the guidance of a Guru. As mentioned earlier, one needs to be initiated into at least Panchadashi to be able to chant Khadgamala and necessarily have Maha Shambhava Diksha with the Purna Shambhava Padukas to be able to undertake the Shadanvaya Rashmi Krama and other advanced practices.

The Mithuna Shuddha Mala addresses all the 360 Rashmis and brings about the evolution that should have normally happened in a year. This information was revealed one morning by Brahmasri N. Subrahmanya Iyer (Chidanandanatha).

Khadga mean sword or mantra

shrlmAtre namaH

Sanskrit words can have many meanings and khaDga could mean stuti. The kosha and could not find a related reference. glrvANa vANI has her own ways!

Sword seems to be a correct interpretation as well. Each of the fifteen [or seventeen if you insist] mAIAs seem to be popularly recognized by upAsakas in two ways:

1. The actual type: shuddha shakti sambuddhyanta, shuddha shiva jayAnta etc.
2. Based on the Siddhi granted by the mAIA [in sakAma pakSha], it is identified as khaDga mAIA, pAduka mAIA etc.

This becomes clear by observing the viniyoga of the mAIA, khaDgasiddhau, as stated in lalitA parisiShTa. It is this mAIA that promises the following:

**tAdR^isham khaDgamApnoti yena hasta sthithena vai |
aShTAdasha mahAdvIpa samrAd bhoktA bhaviShyati ||**

As shuddha shakti mAIA is the most popular, and the siddhi associated with that is khaDga siddhi, people popularly refer to all the mAIAs as khaDgamAIA-s which is technically rather incorrect. It is only the first of the seventeen that is called khaDgamAIA. Now the panchadasha mAIAs are discussed in lalitA parishiShTa and rudrayAmaLa, also in tripurArNava. But bR^ihadvAmakeshwara, while describing ShaTkarmas, does the uddhAra of the mAIA mantra. This mAIA has a longer phalashruti which is mostly about protection: agnivAta mahAkShobhe etc. khaDga is used for defense and offence and the utility of the mAIA [shuddha shakti sambuddhyanta] for both these purposes is detailed in the tantra. One can see that the phalashruti was modified later to drop some lines indicating its use for ShaTkarmas, possibly to avoid abuse, which obviously is not the best thing to do. The corrupted readings of the phalashruti are abundant.

ApatkAle nityapUjAM vistArAt kartumArabhet |

Now, situations like bhUkampa, agnivAta, viplava etc. When nitya pUjA itself is difficult, would Amba be foolish to expect a detailed mAhAyaga at that time? The correct reading is:

ApatkAle nityapUjAm vistArAt kartumakShamaH |

During ApatkAla, when one is unable to perform nityapUjA, he can recite the mAIA mantra and obtain the benefit of nityapUjA. It is with this pramANa from vAmakeshwara that Brahmasri Chidanandanatha composed the laghu pUja paddhati using khaDgamAlA. Of course, unlike the incorrect practice followed by many, he correctly teaches the use of namo.anta and tarpaNanta for pUja and tarpaNa as sambuddhyanta is specifically for japa. shankarAraNya, while commenting on rahasya sahasranAma touches on this subject when dealing with the shloka:

chakrarAjArchanam devyA japo nAmnAm cha kIrtanam | bhaktasya kr^ityametAvadanyadabhudayam viduH ||

During ApatkAla, japa without nyAsa etc., sahasranAma and khaDgamAlA [as a substitute for chakrArchanam] is prescribed in sundarI tantra [this is his quotation]. Moreover, the phalashruti of the mAIA in bR^ihadvAmaka also says: ekavAram japadhyAnam sarvapUjA phalam labet. However, it is to be noted that this statement is only referring to ApatkAla charyA.

A hymn of similar nature is the khaDgamAlA of bhagavatI dakShiNA kAlI. In the phalashruti there, Lord Bhairava states that every name invoked in the mAIA is like a protective sword, which protects the upAsaka and destroys his foes. I only learnt the mAIA and not the phalashruti owing to laziness, like every other stava I know of and hence cannot reproduce the exact verse right away.

garimaa siddhi in Khadgamala

The Structure of Srichakra varies in the three Prime Sampradayas of Srividya. The popular shloka which describes the Srichakra is as follows:

**bindutrikoNa vasukoNa dashArayugma manwashranAgadalasaMyuta
ShoDashaaram |
vR^ittatrayaM cha bhuumIsadanatrayaM cha shrIChakrametaduditaM
paradevataayaaH || (Rudrayamala - 25, 3) and (Siddheshwarimata - 13,5)**

This describes vR^ittatraya (three girdles or circles) after the bhUpUra trailokyamohana chakra. As per Samhara Krama, this will thus become the

dwitlyAvaraNa of the chakrarAja. In Hayagriva Sampradaya, these three circles will be absent in the Srichakra. In the Anandabhairava Sampradaya Chakra, these lines are present in the Srichakra, but there is no Archana performed for this AvaraNa. However, in the Dakshinamurti Sampradaya, these three lines are present in the Srichakra and are also worshipped as one of the AvaraNas. In the outermost line, which is described as white in color, the mAtR^ika shaktis or Yoginis of the letters kaM to kShaM (kalarAtri and others) are worshipped. In the second circle, which is described as red in color, following an anti-clockwise pattern, the shaktis of the swaras i.e. aM to Ah (amR^itA etc.) are worshipped. In the third and the innermost circle, described as having kR^iShNa varNa, the nityA goddesses are worshipped. The chakreshwari of this AvaraNa is tripureshinI, mudrA is mahAyoni and the siddhi is garimA. So, this is where the garimA siddhi fits in. Hence, people who are following the khadgamAla of the sampradayas other than Dakshnimaurti, should not include garimA siddhi in the first AvaraNa. Also, this AvaraNa, which is found only in Dakshiamurti Sampradaya and which houses garimA siddhi is called Trivarga sAdhaka Chakra.

75 khadgamalas.

There are only fifteen malas:

Shiva

Shakti

Shiva-Shakti mithuna

These combined with:

Sambuddhyanta

Svahanta

Namo anta

Tarpananta

Jayanta

Together, they form $3 \times 5 = 15$ mala manthras. Some upasakas use 18 malas but the three malas are guptha and I do not know about them. The use of these three malas is for siddhi of the three kutas at some level is all I know from an old conversation with my Guru. There are many articles on Khadgamala. Please look for them in the archives of this group. 75 malas are probably a result of bad mathematics.

khadga maala - mahaaskandhe or mahaaspandhe

As far as the pATha for khaDgamAlA is concerned, both these words are used, based on the pAtha, which also has the related uddhAra shloka. So, it reads:

1. mahAmAheshwari
2. mahAmahArAj~ni
3. mahAmahAshakte
4. mahAmahAgupte
5. mahAmahAj~napte
6. mahAmahAnande
7. mahAmahAskandhe
8. mahAmahAspande
9. mahAmahAshaye
10. mahAmahAshrIChakranagarasAmrAjyalakShmi

pAThantaras are present of course, based on various other tantras where uddhAra of mAlA mantra is seen. Based on these, great men like shrI sundararAma shAstrigal, Brahmasri Chidanandanatha of Guhananda Mandali etc., have included nine from this list. Any of these versions with a valid pramANa are fine and which among those needs to be followed is something that is decided based on the lineage. Whatever does not have shAstra pramANa cannot be blindly followed merely because the so called "lineage" has handed it down with a diluted essence. You may please refer to the archive for a related discussion on the use of garimA siddhi in the mAlA by some

misguided folks who neither understand the structure of shrIChakra nor the placement of deities therein.

Speaking from the point of Krama tantra, each of these ten names has a special significance. Even in the tradition followed by Sringeri, widely misrepresented by the likes of Tummalapalli Ramalingeshwara Rao etc., there is a procedure to offer tarpana to these ten divinities during navAvaraNa pUjA. Though the practice exists, the intention behind this practice is not generally known to most. In the Krama system, each of these ten epithets represents specific divinities. For example, mahAmahAguptA refers to bhagavatI guhyakAlIkA. As per the system followed in regions around Tibet and Nepal, each of these ten refer to the ten AmnAya nAyikas of the nirvana shrIChakra, following the pramANa of UrdhvamnAya tantra, baDabAnala etc. The same Krama is listed in the procedure taught by H H shrI karapAtri Swamiji, H H Sri mUrkhAranyaji mahArAj etc. Based on what I have been taught [the gurus of the lineage being padmapAda, bimbA bhaTTarIkA, shIIA bhaTTarIkA etc.], these ten do not exhibit a one-to-one mapping with the AmnAya nAyikAs but instead with the dasharatnas discussed in kramamuktAvali. shrI shrIdharAnanda brahmachAriji, a learned scholar who did shiShya vrtti under a disciple of Dhenuka baba in Benaras, describes the use of these epithets in kAlI Krama as well, but with minor differences. Also, my master shrI appa once mentioned that there is a small shrine dedicated to bhagavatI bimbAmbikA somewhere near dvArakA mutt and the carving below the idol of bhagavatI reads: mahAmahAj~naptA. Finally, notice the number of letters in the tenth epithet which is of significance not only from the mAntric view point but also from the view point of the shrIChakra AvaraNa kalpanA in shrIkrama tantra, referred to as sumeru or Ananda vajra.

Khadgamala learning

Khadgamala should never be chanted without initiation into Srividya. The very basic mistake is to even refer to it as Khadgamala Stotra. It is not a Stotra but a mantra, a Mala mantra. The popular version, now being broadcasted without discrimination, is called Shuddha Shakti Sambudhyanta Mala, the first of the fifteen Malas (or 18 malas). Because it confers Khadga Siddhi on the Sadhaka, it is referred to as Khadga Mala. This Mala mantra can be chanted with Sakama or NiShkama attitudes. By merely referring to it as Khadgamala, one automatically hints as the Sakama mode. It is said, "During Diksha, the Guru invokes the Navavarana Devatas into the disciple by reciting the powerful Mala mantra. He then recites the same in the Shishyas ears and then explains the fifteen variations of the Mala. He also then warns the Shishya

against even mentioning the Mala in front of a person who is a non-initiate" (Lalita Parishishtakhye Tantro). It becomes clear here that like other mantras, even Shakti Mala is given during Diksha by the Guru to the Shishya. Again, each of the fifteen Malas belongs to a particular Prakriti and arises from the fifteen letters of the Panchadashi Mantra.

Rudrayamala says, "One should repeat Shakti Mala after the Japa of the Moola mantra (Panchadashi / Shodashi). This increases the merit obtained by chanting the Moola thousand times. O Uma, a person who is not duly initiated into the secrets of Srividyaachara, destroys his life here and thereafter, by chanting this Mala. Kurukulla destroys his family and dynasty". By reciting Shakti Mala, one begins to awaken the Kundalini and begins to lead her through the various Chakras. This is an advanced practice and requires the grace to Guru. Without the Moola mantra and the energies of one's Guru lineage, the aspirant is incapable of handling or channeling the huge amounts of energies generated by chanting mantras like Khadgamala. The deities, who are various forms of energy, begin manifesting in the Sadhaka and without the energy of the Moola mantra, they attain a state of non-synergy and create havoc. The aspirant thus brings on himself a great risk. By ignoring the words of the scriptures, of Lord Adinatha Shiva, one brings about his own self-destruction.

**gatyAlasA ghUrNitanetrapadma
vANyA svabhaktoShmahaApi saumya |
jAne duraj~nAnavinAshanena
chaNDIti gltA subhagA bhavAnI ||**

**yamAmananti shrutayaH padArtham na sanna chAsanna bahirna chAntaH |
sa sacchidAnandaghanaH parAtmA nArAyaNastvaM puruShaH purANaH ||**

KAmeswara

namaH paradevatAyai

paradevata is described as shivashaktyaikyarUpiNI and hence worship of parameshwarI includes the worship of parameshwara. The pramANas stating abheda between kAmeshvara and kAmeshvarI are many. Both shrIvidyA and shrIchakra themselves are shiva-shaktyAtmaka. Hence, the first sentence and say, worship of lalitA i.e. navAvaraNa Krama, is as much worship of kAmeshvara as of kAmeshvarI and this seems to sound better with our philosophy. The former interpretation would probably be anya mata, and of significantly lesser interest to our school of thought. On a deeper thought, how can one worship kAmeshvara?

According to shrIvidyA tantra, Brahman is always shaktivishiShTa:

sarvashakti paraM brahma nityamApUrNamavyayam ||

sa~NkShepashArIra holds the same view:

chicChaktiH parameshvarasya vimalA chaitanyamevochyate ||

The samaShTi shakti of brahma is what we call tripurasundarI. An analogy to explain the same is as below. kAmeshvara or nirguNa brahma is like a thin sheet of canvas which is completely white without any colors, extremely thin and expansive. Now, by coating it with rice paste uniformly across the surface, it gains density and strength. Now, the canvas is ready to be painted on and this state can be referred to as shakti vishiShTa Brahman. As the canvas, by itself, cannot even be placed upright, it is the rice paste that is the cause for the upcoming painting. However, if this rice paste were to be isolated from the canvas, would she be able to create a painting? No, hence it is said, shivaniShThA shaktireva sR^ishTyAtmanA pariNamate. This is pariNAMavAda in a nutshell.

According to upaniShad siddhAnta, mAyA is the shakti of Brahman and she is jaDa shakti. And it is this mAyA who is the pariNAMA upAdAna of the world [the material cause which undergoes transformation to another form, like the milk becoming the curd]. Brahma is the vivartopAdAna [the material cause which does not undergo any change but merely appears as an effect, similar to a rope appearing like the snake]. Due to this, it comes to be established that the jagat is also falsehood and

jaDa. Contrastingly, the view of tripurA tantra, explained earlier, can be summarized as: chidvilAsaH prap~ncho.yam. In either case, the need of shakti for creation is indisputable.

With this background on shiva and shakti or kAmeshvara and kAmeshvarI tattvas, one can examine the following verse from vAmakeshvara:

**shaktyA vinA shive sUkShme nAma dhAma na vidyate |
j~nAtenApi mahAdevi sharma karma na ki~nchana ||**

parabrahma is without any attributes and upAsanA of such an entity, involving nAma klrtana etc. is not possible. Hence, it is shakti vishiShTa brahma who is the upAsya, represented by mahAkAmeshvara mithuna in tripurA tantra. kAmeshvara, who represents the bindu of shrIchakra, due to abhAva or lack of saguNatva, cannot be "worshiped" alone and has to be worshiped along with kameshvarI seated on his lap. Hence, it is also said to be mandatory to worship the Ayudhas of both kAmeshvarI and kAmeshvara outside mahAtryashra.

Samkshepa Puja

shrIchakra bAhyā varivasyA can be performed in five ways:

1. Starting with the Ayudhas of kAmeshvara mithuna till the bindu
2. Starting with vashinyAdi vAgdevatas till the bindu
3. Starting with chaturdashAra till the bindu
4. Starting with bhUgR^iha till the bindu
5. Worship of bhUgR^iha, aShTadala and navayoni chakras

Except for the fourth kind, other types of brief worship are permitted only during emergency, when performing a complete navAvaraNa is not possible. It is said:

**ashaktAnAm tu vistAre tathA.a.apatsu cha shasyate |
anyathA.anarthakAri syAt sa~nkochArchanamIshvari ||**

While describing brief worship, j~nAnArNava lists the following three types:

**chakram samarchayeddevi sakalam niyatavrataH |
bAhyamadhyagataM vApi madhyam vA chakramarchayet ||**

1. One should always try to worship all the nine AvaraNas everyday.
2. If that is not possible, one should worship six AvaraNas starting from chaturdashAra
3. If even that is not possible, one should worship three AvaraNas starting with aShTara till bindu

shivAnandanAtha is of the opinion that a mode of saMkShepArchana can be to worship only mahAkAmeshvarI, mahAvajreshvarI, mahAbhagamAlinI and mahAtripurasundarI which is refuted by the incomparable bhAskaraAya and also by pUrvAchAryas like the author of manoramA.

Devimana Ashtanga

namaH shrIpurabhairavyai

kAla gaNanA is accomplished normally by adopting pa~nchA~Nga scheme which most of us are familiar with. The five angas are:

1. Tithi
2. nakShatra
3. yoga
4. karaNa
5. vAra

Similarly, a parallel calendar is used by Srividyaupasakas who have undergone pUrNAbhiSheka, called devImAna aShTA~Nga. The source for this scheme is Rudrayamala, Shaktiyamala, Paramananda Tantra, Kaulikarnava, Tantraraja, Srigarbha Kularnava, Nathakrama patala of Badabanala, Tripurasundari Tantra and works such as Saubhaya Tantra, Saubhagya Chintamani, Dattareya Samhita, Saubhagyodaya, Nitya Kalpa, Nathodaya, Kala Nitya Nirnaya, Durvasa Kalpa etc. The knowledge of Ashtanga is considered very auspicious and important for a Srividya Upasaka as it has various applications in Japa, Puja, Parayana, Kala Nitya Krama etc. The Ashtangas are:

1. Yuga
2. Parivritti
3. Varsha
4. Masa
5. Divasa
6. Nityaa

7. Vasara

8. Ghatikodaya

The number of yugas are: 36

Every Yuga has 36 Parivrttis

Every Parivrtti has 36 years

Every year has 16 months

Every month has 36 days

Every month has 15+15 Nityas

Every week has 9 days and so on.

Devi herself pervades everything as kAlanityA and these form her organs or avayavas. Like rashmi samkalana normally done applies to desha sundarl, aShTa~Nga is applicable in terms of kAla sundarl. As this refers only to kAla and not desha, samkalpa is incomplete if performed only using aShTA~Nga, which is unfortunately followed by most due to incorrect understanding of the Tantra. For the same reason, Samkalpas printed in Srividya Nityahnika, Kanchi Mutt Panchangam, Coimbatore edition etc. should not be adopted directly. The procedure for desha kirtana is to be learnt from Sadguru. Further, Mahayuga, Kalpa, Mahakalpa, Natha Yuga, Nitya Yuga, Matrika Yuga and other concepts are also used by Upaskas. Shodashanga and Dvatrimshadangas are also known but less used due to complexity.

Generally in August, the new Parivrtti [daM chakShustattvAkhyā] will start and this will result in ten mahAyogas [from puShpiNI to chandroparAgā] to converge on the same day. This day is more auspicious than one can ever imagine and occurs once in every 144 years. Worshiping Paradevata on such a day will invite divine grace. This day is of greater significance at Kanchipuram as Sage Durvasa performs Mahabhisekha and another auspicious ritual to Sri Kamakshi on this sacred day in the presence of all celestial deities. Those who behold the Sri Vighraha of Kamakshi and the Salagrama Srichakra attain great merit. Japa, Homa, Saparya, Tarpana,

Brahmana Bhojana etc performed on this day yield great phala. Also, on this sacred day, the cycle of lopAmudrA culminates and the age of Sri Bhairava commences. The Maha Samayaa for this day is Jaya Durga, Nakshatra Yogini is Vajra Kubja, Dina Yogini is Guhya Kali and soon. The Euphoria associated with this sacred day can only be experienced and not expressed in words.

**darpa~Nkuro makaraketanavibhramANAm
ninda~Nkuro vidalitotpalachaturINAm |
dIpa~Nkuro bhavatamisrakadambakAnAm
kAmAkShi palayatu mAm tvadapa~NgapAtaH ||**

Hadi Mata

The concept and structure of AmnAyaS varies differently in the case of kAdi and hAdi mata-s. In the ShaDAmnAya scheme of hAdimata, UrdhvAmnAya forms the highest AmnAya and pAtAlAmnAya forms the lowest. kAdimata does not consider pAtAlAmnAya outside the purview of shrIkula Krama tantra but includes anuttarAmnAya instead. The devatA presiding over UrdhvAmnAya is sundarI in the case of hAdimata, which is why it is called sundarI Krama. mahAkAmakalA kAlI presides over the UrdhvAmnAya in the case of kAdimata and hence the name kAlI Krama:

**UrdhvAmnAye mahAShoDhA uttare tAriNI smR^itA |
ayaM hAdimate proktaH shR^iNu kAdimate.adhuna ||
mahAkAmakalA kAlI tUrdhvAmAye.atra devatA |
dashakAlyAdi bhedaishcha kaniShThaH parirkIrtitaH ||**

The hAdi Krama lists the AmnAyaS based primarily on darshanas:

**shAktaM shaivaM vaiShNavaM cha sauraM gANapameva cha |
bauddhaM cha devadeveshi ShaDAmnAyAH prakIrtitaH ||**

The six Amnayas corresponding to the six darshanas, discussed in hAdimata tantra and quoted in shaktisa~Ngama are:

1. shAkta
2. shaiva
3. vaiShNava
4. saura
5. gANapatya
6. bauddha

Some Tantras, mostly dealing with hAdi vidyA, offer a mapping of these darshanas with the classic pUrvAdi Amnayas:

**shAktaM shaivaM vaiShNavaM cha gANapaM saurameva cha |
UrdhvaM pUrvaM dakShayoge pratyak chodak cha pArvati ||**

1. **UrdhvAmnAya:** shAkta
2. **pUrvAmnAya:** shaiva
3. **dakShiNAmnAya:** vaiShNava
4. **pashchimAmnAya:** gANapatya
5. **uttarAmnAya:** saura
6. **pAtAIAmnAya:** bauddha

This scheme differs from kAdimata where:

1. **pUrvAmnAya:** vaidika, agni, gaNapati
2. **dakshiNAmnAya:** shaiva
3. **pashchimAmnAya:** vaiShNava
4. **uttarAmnaya:** shAkta
5. **UrdhvAmnAya:** shAmbhava
6. **anuttarAmnAya:** kevala-brahmAmnAya

hAdi mata also associates AchAras with AmnAya:

1. **pAtAIAmnAya:** gandharva, apsarA, indrajAla etc. and hence pashvAchAra
2. **pUrvAmnAya:** kaulAchara
3. **dakShiNAmnAya:** dakshiNAchAra
4. **pashchimAmnAya:** vlrAchAra

5. **uttarAmnAya:** vAmAchAra

6. **UrdhvAmnAya:** divyamArga or brahmamArga

The usage of AmnAya is also tied to geography by some tantras, which divide the Indian sub-continent into five prasthas:

1. indraprastha
2. yamaprastha
3. varuNaprastha
4. kUrmaprastha and
5. devaprastha

Tattva Sandoha Puja

The thrity-six tattvas starting with shiva till dharA constitute of the Asana or yogapItha of shrI parAmbA. The thirty-six tattvas are those which have existence till the (end of) praLaya. While the popular list of thirty-six tattvas from shAkta tantra are well-known and will be presented later, according to several shaivAgamas, they include:

1. Five MahabhUtas
2. Five Tanmatras
3. Five Jnanendriyas
4. Five Karmendriyas
5. 7 Dhatus
6. Manas
7. 5 Vayus
8. mAyA
9. shuddha vidyA
10. maheshvara

shrI parAmbA represents all these tattvas and also represents the Truth beyond these due to her existence before and after the praLaya [nityA]. As Shadhadva-s constitute of the sharIra of mahAkAmeshvarI, the thrity-six tattvas which form the tattvAdhva, represent a limb of the Supreme Queen.

The following nAmAvali is used according to sampradAya bheda for two purposes during shrIchakra navAvaraNa pUjA. The first is during Asana pUjA of shrIdevI, used mostly by auttareyas who follow pramANas other than the kalpasUtra that discuss elaborate Asana pUjA or simhAsana pUjA. The second use, as we follow, is during the sAmayika pUjA. Before the sAmayikas are handed pAtras, the person in charge

of the pUjA performs archana to parAmba with these names using a special ingredient and then displays pancha bhUta, khaDga, shUla, chakra, ardhayoni and bilva mudrAs over the dravya while reciting mantras of amR^ita mr^ityu~njaya, amR^iteshvarI, nityaklinnA, mR^itasa~njIvinI and kulakAmadhenu, described as amR^ita pa~nchaka and proceeds towards gurupAtra viniyoga.

We hope this nAmAvali, which is found with numerous pATha bhedas, will be of use to upAsakas of shrIvidyA parameshvarI. The bljAs used before the names can be tritari, sapraNava tritari, panchatari, saptatari (by those initiated into UrdhvAmnAya) or ashtatari (by those into shAmbhavAmnAya). According to sampradAya, the practice in our Mandali is to use tritari followed by the mUla mantra which would be mahAShoDashI as others are not permitted to perform viniyoga with amR^ita pa~nchaka. The following version follows the pATha in varivasyA prakAshA, a commentary of saubhAgyaratnAkara paddhati, with some minute changes based on the popular usage in sampradAya.

1. shivashaktirUpa mahAtripurasundaryai namaH
2. shaktisvarUpa mahAmAyAyai namaH
3. sadAshivasvarUpa shAmbhavyai namaH
4. IshvarasvarUpa mahAdurgAyai namaH
5. shuddhavidyAsvarUpa icChAj~nAnakriyAshaktyai namaH
6. mAyArUpa bhayAyai namaH
7. kAlarUpa samhAriNyai namaH
8. niyatirUpa sR^ishTyai namaH
9. kalArUpa sthityai namaH
10. vidyArUpa sarvamantramayyai namaH
11. rAgarUpa ShaTkarmasiddhidAyai namaH
12. puruSharUpa bhogamokShapradAyinyai namaH

13. prakR^itirUpa paramAnandaghanAyai namaH
14. buddhirUpa j~nAnAyai namaH
15. aha~NkArarUpa garviShThAyai namaH
16. manorUpa tR^iptikaryai namaH
17. shrotrarUpa bodhikAyai namaH
18. charmarUpa sundaryai namaH
19. netrarUpa prakAshAyai namaH
20. jihvArUpa rasagrahaNAyai namaH
21. ghrANarUpa gandhagrahAyai namaH
22. vachanarUpa siddhasarasvatyai namaH
23. pAnirUpa sahasrabhujamaNDalAyai namaH
24. pAdarUpa manovegAyai namaH
25. pAyurUpa nityashuddhAyai namaH
26. upastharUpa ana~NgashAstrasiddhAntAyai namaH
27. shabdarUpa nAdanAdAntasthAyai namaH
28. sparsharUpa nispR^ihAyai namaH
29. rUparUpa kAmeshavashyadhurandharArai namaH
30. rasarUpa kulAmR^itaikaniShThAyai namaH
31. gandharUpa sugandhAnandanandinyai namaH

32. pR^ithivIrUpa sarvAdhArAyai namaH
33. jalarUpa jIvanapradAyai namaH
34. agnirUpa dahanAyai namaH
35. vAyurUpa pa~nchapraANAtmikAyai namaH
36. AkAsharUpa chidAkAshanilayAyai namaH
37. sarvatattvAtItasvarUpa shrIparAmbAyai namaH

Srividya Stotras

Stotras on Sri Vidya and its Anga devas.

Stotra Sahitya is like a huge ocean. It is impossible to list all Srividya Para Stotras. Let me make an attempt to list some important ones that we use in our Sampradaya.

mahAgaNapati:

- shrImahAgaNapati pancharatna of shankara bhagavatpAda and shrI gaNesha bhujangaprayAta stuti and shrI gaNAdhipati pancharatna of shrI shrI sacchidAnanda shivAbhinava nrsimha bhArati
- shrImahAgaNapati sahasranAma stotra - rudrayAmaLa, devIrahasya, gaNesha purANa, vinAyaka tantra, saMkhyAyana tantra, Aditya purANa, uDDAmareshvara tantra, gaNesha rahasya etc.
- trailokyamohana gaNesha sahasranAma stotra - rudrayAmaLa
- ucChiShTa mahAgaNapati stavarAja - rudrayAmaLa, uDDAmareshvara tantra, sugrIva prokta, gaNesha rahasya
- kavacha-s for various forms of gaNesha such as haridrA gaNesha kavacha, vakratuNDa kavacha, ucChiShTa mahAgaNapati kavacha, gaNesha-bhairava varma, trailokyamohana gaNapati kavacha, mahAgaNapati kavacha, kukShi gaNapati kavacha, ShoDasha gaNapati kavacha, guNeshvara kavacha, svAnandesha kavacha, buddhi kavacha, siddhi kavacha, madhumati kavacha, nilasarasvatI kavacha, parapravoganaAshana chaNDagaNapati kavacha, ekadanta kavacha, ekadaMShTra kavacha, baDabAnala gajavadana panjara etc.
- mahAgaNapati apAmArjana stava, mahAgaNapati tarpaNi stava, mahAgaNapati panchAvaraNa stava, mahAgaNapati ShoDashAvaraNa stava, ucChiShTa gaNapati panchaka [kavacha, sahasranAma, hrdaya, aShTottara, panjara, stavarAja, kIlaka and argaLa in uDDAmareshvara tantra]

shrI guru:

- UrdhvAmnAya gurumaNDala kavacha
- pAduKA pancharatna stotra, toTakAShTaka, gurumaNDala stava, guru paramparA stotra, prAtaHkAlIna gurusmaraNa pancharatna
- guru sahasranAma, gurvaShTottara, vedavyAsAShTottara
- Anandabhairava kavacha, Anandabhairava mAIA, Anandabhairava mUlamantAtmaka stuti, Anandabhairava saptAngaka dhyAna

dakShiNAmUrti:

- dakShiNAmUrti sahasranAma - chidambara tantra
- dakShiNAmUrti aShTaka of shankara bhagavatpAda
- dakShiNAmUrti panjara, dakShiNAmUrti trailokyamohana kavacha, dakShiNAmUrti kavacha from skAnda, dakShiNAmUrti mantragarbha kavacha from dakShiNAmUrti samhita, medhA dakshinaMurti kavacha etc.
- dakshinaMurti mUlamantAtmaka aShTottara from chidambara tantra
- dakShiNAmUrti hrdaya and panchadasha mAIA sUKta

bAIA:

- bAIA sahasranAma - rudrayAmala, viShNuyAmala, vAmakeshvara tantra
- bAIA tripurasundari kavacha - rudrayAmala, shaktisangama tantra, vAmakeshvara tantra, bAIA tantra, UrdhvAmnAya tantra, bAIArchana chandrika etc.
- bAIA hrdaya, stavaratna, mUlamantAtmaka stava, aShTottara shatanama stava
- bAIA mUlamantAtmaka stotra
- bAIA khaDgamAIA

annapUrNA:

- annapUrNA sahasranAma - rudrayAmaLa, UrdhvAmnAya tantra
- annapUrNASHTaka of shankara bhagavatpAda
- annapUrNA kavacha, hR^idaya, mUlamantAtmaka stava, aShTottara

Ashwarudha:

Mulamantratmaka Ashwarudha Stotra

Ashwarudha Hridaya

Ashwarudha Kavacha

Rajashyamala:

Rajamathangi Sahasranama [Saubhagyalakshmi Kalpa]

Laghu Matangi Sahasranama

Matangi Ashtottara

Rajashyamala Ashtottara

Matangi Kavacha, Matangi Hridaya

Rajashyamala Kavacha, Rajashyamala Ashtottara

Shyamala Stavaratna, Shyamala Mala mantras

Rajamatangi Trailokya vashya kavacha

Matangi Sumukhi Kshipra Siddhi kavacha etc.

Mahavarahi:

Adi Varahi Sahasranama

Mahavarahi Sahasranama

Adi Varahi Kavacha

Mahavarahi Kavacha

Varahi Nigraha + Anugrahashtaka

Varahi Shatru Mardana Stotra

Vartali Ari Nigraha Stava

Mahavarahi Ashtottara Shatanama

Vartala Prachanda Ripu Mardana Stotra, Mala mantras

Kirata Varahi Stava

Dhumra Varahi Stava

Vajra Varaji Mantra Panjara

Mulamantratmaka Swapna varahi Stavaraaja

Tiraskarini Kavacha, mala mantra

Nrisimha:

Nrisimha Kavachas (about six variations from different scriptures)

Hiranyaka Narasimha Kavacha

Pancha Mukha Nrisimha kavacha

Nrisimha Sahasranama

Nrisimha Ashtottara

Lakshmi Nrisimha Ashtottara

Gandabherunda Nrsimha Kavacha

Sudarshana Nrsimha Kavacha Stotra

Badabanala Nrsimha Mala

Sri Lakshmi Nrsimha Karunarasa Stotra of Adi Shankara etc

Chandi:

Saptashati

Mahavidya Durga Sahasranama

Chandika Sahasranama

Chandika Mula mantra trishati

Chandika Vijaya Dhwaja Stava

Chandika Hridaya

Vanadurga:

Hridaya, Ashtottara, Kavacha, Mula mantra Stuti

Shulini:

Hridaya, Kavacha, Pratikriya Stotra, Sumukhikarana Stava

Vishwarupa Stotra, Ari damana panchaka

Pratyangira:

Pratyangira Sahasranama

Atharvana Bhadrakali Sahasranama

Pratyangira kavacha

Atharvana Bhadra Kali Kavacha

Ashtottara, Pratyangira Mala, Hridaya, Ashtaka, Khadgamala etc.

Sharabheswara:

Sahasranamas from Akasha Bhairava Kalpa and Rudrayamala

Ashtottara, Kavacha, Mala, Ashtaka

PrachandAvishkarana Stuti

Aghora:

Kavacha, Kilaka Stuti, Malas

Mula mantratmaka Stava

Mahimna Stotra

Kartaviryarjuna:

Adbhuta Kavacha

For Swarnakarshana Bhairava:

Kavacha, Stotra, Ashtottara, mala

Nilasaraswati:

Sahasranama, Ashtottara

Kavacha, Hridaya, Mala, Khadgamala, Ashtaka, Varma etc.

Mahasudarsana:

Sahasranama, Ashtottara, Kavachas (various from Mrigendra Samhita, Ahirbdhnya Samhita etc.)

Malas, Ashtaka, Mula mantra Stuti, Hridaya etc.

Sadashiva:

Shiva Sahasranama [Bharata, Linga purana, Shiva Rahasya]

Mrtyunjaya Sahasranama

Shiva Kavacha, Varma, Mala

Prasada Mahakavacha

Shambhava Mithuna Kavacha etc

Shivashtottara

Mahatripurasundari Namavali:

Lalita Sahasranama, Lalita Trishati, Lalita Ashtottara of Lalitopakhyana

Saubhagya Ashtottara

Divyashtottara

Lakaradi Ashtottara

Ashcharyashtotatra

Shodashi Shatanama

Rajarajeshwari Shatanama, Rajarajeshwari Sahasranama, Mahashodashi Sahasranama

Sri Lalita Panchashati

Shivankita Lalita Ashtottara

Srividya Kavachas:

Panchadashi Kavacha [Yamala]

Saubhagya Brahmanidya Kavacha of Vamakeshwara Tantra

Nitya Kavacha of Tantraraja

Trailokyavijaya Kavacha of Gandharva Tantra

Trailokya Moahana Kavacha

Shodashi Kavachas from Siddhayamala and Kulananda Samhita

Para yoni kavacha

Mahashodashi kavacha

Trailokya Kshobhana Kavach

Trailokya Stambhana Kavacha etc.

Hridayas:

Shodashi Hridaya

Sundari Hridaya

Saubhagya Hridaya

Mahatripurasundari Rahasya Hridaya etc.

Stotras:

Amnaya Stotra

Panchami Stavaraja

Saundaryalahari

Tripura Mahimna Stotra

Lalita Stavaratna

Shodashi Kalyani Stotra

Divyamangala Dhyana

Makaranda Stava

Srividya Brihat Karpura, Chakraraja Varnana Stava

Srividya Rajagopala Stava etc.

Shodashi

The varNas are four in number:

1. brAhmaNa
2. kShatriya
3. vaishya
4. shUdra

The Ashramas are sixteen in number:

1. gAyatro brAhmaNaH prAjApatyo bR^ihanniti brahmachAriNaH chaturvidhA bhavanti.
2. vArtAkavR^ittayaH shAllnavR^ittayo yAyAvarA ghorasannyAsikAshcheti gR^ihasthA chaturvidhA bhavanti.
3. vaikhAnasA udumbarA bAlakhilyAH phenapashcheti vAnaprasthA chaturvidhA bhavanti.
4. kuTichakA bahUdaka hamSAH paramhamsAshcheti parivrAjakA api chaturvidhA bhavanti.

The ShoDashI mahAmantra is composed of four kUTas and sixteen letters which represent the vyApti of the mantra across every varNa and Ashrama and this indicates the following:

1. Usefulness of ShoDashI mantra for every varNa and Ashrama
2. Due to its vyApti across the spectrum of varNa and Ashrama, it represents dharma puruShartha, the basis for the other three puruShArthas.

While commenting on his stava on bhagavatI dharmasamvardhinI, shrI shankarAraNya reveals this elevating interpretation of the name dharminI from the nAmasAhasrI and quotes shrIgarbha kulArNava as pramANa.

karmAkarmavivarjite kavimukhe vAgvR^iShTikAdambinI
kAvyAlApavibodhinIshakalike kaumAri kAtyAyani |
kAntArdhenduvibhUShaNe smarakale shrIkAmakoTishwari
dehi shrIpadapadmabhaktimanishaM dharmAmbike shrIshive ||

Trikhanda Mudra

namastripurabhairavyai

Each of the ten mudrAs starting with sarvasaMkShobhiNI and ending with sarvatrikhaNDA have their own importance. However, trikhaNDA is indeed special due to one reason. The entire kalApa of bahiryAga assumes significance after the presence of shrI sundarI in the bimba or yantra and the mudrA which accomplishes the AvAhana of parAmbA is trikhaNDA:

trikhaNDeyaM mahAmudrA tripurAhvAnakarmaNi [vAmakeshvare]

Hence, bahiryAga siddhi is attributed to trikhaNDA mudrA specifically among the dasa mudrAs. Of course, bhAskaraAya does state in setubandha that upAsanA is japaUpa in kali yuga and hence archana is an anga of japa and not vice versa. If this is accepted, then bahiryAga siddhi would seem more logical when associated with sarvayoni mudrA rather than trikhaNDA. However, this view, even if not incorrect, does not seem to find support either in kalpasUtra, tantrarAja or nityAShoDashikaArNava where japa is an anga of bahiryAga. So also says the tradition.

Here, tri means three and it can denote either janma, mR^ityu and jarA or sattva, rajas and tamas. As this mudrA, which is non-different from parAmbA, destroys this triad, it is called trikhaNDA:

trIn khaNDayatIti trikhaNDA ||

In other words, the mudrA grants kaivalya or mokSha.

Alternately, tri here represents icchA, j~nAna and kriyA shaktis or the three khaNDas of the supreme mahAvidyA namely vAgbhava, kAmarAja and soma kUTas. The mudrA which represents these three khaNDas is named trikhaNDA.

**mudrAkhyA sA yadA samvidambika trikaAmayI |
trikhaNDARUpamApanna sada sAnnidhyakArINI || [yogini tantre]**

Though vAmakeshvara tantra teaches only two khaNDas for the mudrA, bhAskaraAya instructs the upAsaka to refer to tantrAntara and necessarily accomplish khaNDatraya:

**trikhaNDeti yogArthasampattaye tantrAntaraM sharaNIkR^itya
khaNDatrayamavashyaM sampAdanIyam |**

It is of great significance to know why a specific mantra of three kUTas is coupled with trikhaNDA during AvAhana of parAmbA and not panchadashI or ShoDashI. The answer to this lies in the concept of awakening kuNDalinI or the serpent of fire which is what AvAhana is all about. And when we say snake, there is hissing and she is yogAgni svarUpinI. I am sure many have seen the Harry Potter series of movies. Potter, to communicate with a snake (in Goblet of Fire), uses its language which is predominantly a hissing sound. While this is fiction, the Yogis of Tibet who practice gtummo to awaken the sacred fire use a similar technique. The exact sanketa rahasya should be grasped from Sadguru.

Also, one can refer to the following statement from bhAvanopaniShad:

AdhAranavakaM mudrAshaktayaH ||

The nine AdhAras are mUIAdhArAdi ShaTka, Urdhva and adhaH sahasrAra, and lambikAgra. Each of these corresponds to one of the nine mudrAs (sarvasaMkShobhiNI to sarvayoni). The samaShTi of these navAdhAras and hence of nava mudrAs (grouped into three categories) is represented by trikhaNDA mudrA. Thus, the mudrA also represents the source tattva of the nine aspects: sR^iShTi sR^iShTi, sR^iShTi sthiti etc. shrI bhAskaraAya thus illustrates the following prayoga:

pAdA~NguShTharUpa AdhAranavakAtmane sarvatrikhaNDAmudrAyai namaH ||

**mukundo govindo janakatanayAlAlitapadaH
padaM prAptA yasyAdhamakulabhavA chApi shabarI |
girAtIto.agamyo vimaladhiShaNairvedavachasA
ramAnAtho rAmo ramatu mama chitte tu satatam ||**

Aksharasamkya Nirdesha

ambA is worshipped through various mantras. Of these, panchadashI, shuddha ShoDashI, saubhAgya brahmavidyA or saubhAgya panchadashI (ShoDashI) and mahAShoDashI are the most important mantras in most of the dAkShiNAtya shrIvidyA sampradAyas. The number of letters in these mantras is indicated by the names of parAmbA based on katapaya calculations.

Name 1: lalitAmbA

La-3; li-3; tAm-6; bA-3

Total: 3+3+6+3 = 15 -> shuddha panchadashI

Name 2: lalitAmbika

La-3; li-3; tAm-6; bi-3; kA-1

Total: 3+3+6+3+1= 16 -> shuddha ShoDashI

Name 3: shrIlalitAmbika

shrl-2; La-3; li-3; tAm-6; bi-3; kA-1

Total: 2+3+3+6+3+1= 18 -> saubhAgya brahmavidyA

Name 4: shrIrAjarAjeshvarI

shrl-2; rA-2; ja-8; rA-2; je-8; shva-4; rl-2

Total: 2+2+8+2+8+4+2 = 28 -> mahAShoDashI

The same can be seen with respect to chaNDI as well. chan-6 and DI-3, thus indicating 6+3=9. On reversing the digits, the mantra denotes the thirty-six tattvas starting from shiva till dharA.

Srichakra Mahima

The greatness of shrIchakra is described in rudrayAmala thus:

samyak shatakratUn kr^itvA yatphalaM samavApnuyAt |
tatphalaM labhate bhaktyA kR^itvA shrIchakradarshanam ||

By seeing a shrIchakra with devotion, one attains the same merit as having performed hundreds of fire sacrifices.

mahAShoDashadAnAdi kR^itvA yallabhate phalam |
tatphalaM samavApnoti kR^itvA shrIchakradarshanam ||

By seeing a shrIchakra, one attains the same merit as performing sixteen kinds of charities including kanyA dAna, godAna, svarNa dAna etc.

sArdhatrikoTilrtheShu snAtvA yatphalamashnute |
labhate tatphalaM bhaktyA kR^itvA shrIchakradarshanam ||

By seeing a shrIchakra with devotion, one attains the same merit as bathing in innumerable tIrtas.

koTili~NgapratiShThAyAM yatphalaM samudAhR^itam |
tatphalaM labhate nUnaM shrIchakrasya cha pUjanAt ||

By worshipping shrIchakra as prescribed by the shAstras, one attains the same merit as installing innumerable shiva lingas.

shrIchakraM kArayitvA tu yo dadyAt sAdhakAya vai |
bhUchakraM tena dattaM sashailavanasAgaram ||

By giving a shrIchakra to an upAsaka as dAna, one attains the same merit as giving the entire bhUmaNDala in dAna to a dvija.

ga~NgApuShkaranarmadAsayamunAgodAvarIgomati-
ga~NgAdvAragayAprayAgabadarIvArANasIsindhuShu |
revAsetusarasvatIprabhR^itiShu brahmANDabhANDodare
tIrtasAnasahasrakoTiguNitaM shrIchakrapAdodakam ||

Much greater merit than taking a dip at tlrthas such as gangA, puShkara, narmadA, yamunA, godAvarI, gomatl, haridvAra, prayAgA, badarikAshrama, kAshI, sindhu, sarasvatI, sAgara is attained by sipping by sprinkling on oneself, shrIChakra pAdodaka.

namAmi lalitAchakraM bhaktAnAmiShTadAyakam ||

Sripurti Vidya

The more popular hAdi pUrti vidyA is used variously by kAdi upAsakas in pAduka, nyAsa, suvAsinI pUjA, arghya saMskAra and so on. This probably led to his incorrect conclusion that the kAdi pUrti vidyA was simply an altered form of its hAdi counterpart without any shAstra pramANa. The popular pramANa for pUrti vidyA occurs in the kalpasUtra of bhArgava rAma:

pa~nchamaikAdashabljavarjA shrIreva shrUpUrtividya brahmakoTare yaShTavya |

The sUtra here describes the way to modify the shrIvidyA (i.e. the mUlavidyA) to obtain the formula for pUrti vidyA. And the mUla vidyA is described elsewhere in the same scripture as below:

**mAdanashaktibindumAlinIvAsavamAyAghoShadoShAkarakandarpa
gaganamaghavadbhuvanabhR^igupuShpabANabhUmAyeti seyaM tasyA
mahAvidyA ||**

This is a clear indication of kAdi vidyA, thus forming the pramANa for kAdi pUrti vidyA. While some obscure commentaries try to interpret the above sUtra as indulging in hAdi vidyoddhAra, as lopAmudrA mahAvidyA is separately revealed thus in the same scripture:

**shivashaktikAmakShitimAyAravIndusmarahaMsapurandarabhuvana
parAmanmathavAsava bhauvanAshcha shivAdividyA svasvarUpavimarshinI |**

But the formation of hAdi pUrti vidyA need not be negated here as the sUtra says elsewhere:

**tadrashminihataakashmalajAlaH kAdiM vA hAdiM vA mUlavidyAM manasa
dashamAvartya |**

But the grouping of kAdi vidyA under shrIpanchaka or mUla vidyA panchaka instead of hAdi vidyA clearly indicates either that the choice here is based on the supposed greater merit of kAdi vidyA or simply that the kalpasUtra is a kAdi para shAstra. While most scriptures and shAstrajnas secularly declare the non-difference between kAdi and hAdi vidyAs, there is always a voice asserting the supremacy of kAdi over hAdi, be it the revelation of the vidyA in tripurA and devyupaniShads, the nirdesha in

shrIsUkta, or the order of revelation by Acharya bhagavatpAda in saundaryalahari shAstra. A subtle acceptance of the dominance of kAdi over hAdi comes from bhAskaraAya. It is worth pondering if popularity of kAdi among practitioners is the only cause for this slight edge that it evidently has over hAdi vidyA.

Coming back to the topic, sampradAya never has a doubt regarding kAdi pUrTi vidyA. Teachers right from umAnandanAtha till nIlakaNTha mahAdeva joshi have clearly documented the kAdi version of pUrTi vidyA. As for the popular use, many belonging to bhAskaraAya's lineage (yes, everyone does lately!) are taught to use kAdi panchadashI and kAdi pUrTi vidyA as anga vidyAs of mahAShoDashI juring japa. kAdi pUrTi vidyA forms the core of the esoteric parA ShoDashI mahAmantra where the importance of both mAyA (of panchadashI) and ramA (of ShoDashI) is replaced by the visarga shakti of the devI hR^idaya vidyA. The Asana or the maNDala for the bindu named parA is formed by the kAdi pUrTi vidyA and this symbolism is practically utilized in Urdhva kAmakalA dhyAna of the parA ShoDashI krama. puNyAnanda briefly describes this version of kAmakalA dhyAna, somewhat different from the more popular version described in the verse: mikhaM binduM kR^itvA. Also, the dIpana vidyA for parAShoDashI is indeed kAdi pUrTi vidyA and this observation is of significance when the formula for obtaining dIpana vidyAs for various mantras is examined in the light of agastya sUtra. A certain kalpa, dealing with general kAdi vidhi, prescribes kAdi pUrTi vidyA for tIrtha nirmAla sVikAra, without quoting the appropriate pramANa.

Also, some lineages in Gujrat and Rajasthan use kAdi pUrTi vidyA in the pAduka mantra instead of the hAdi version. A certain gentleman from Baroda who approached us a few years ago for uDDamareshvara tantra explained of the practice in his lineage to use kAdi vidyA in the day through dakShiNAchAra and hAdi in the night through kaulAchAra. Based on his practice, the pAduka underwent modifications as well. While we are taught the worship of five devatAs like kAmakalA kAlI, bagaLA, ChinnamastA etc, based on kAdi, hAdi or sAdi krama, the practice revealed by this gentleman seems to represent a relatively lost tradition.

**yasmin viruddhagatayo hyanishaM patanti
vidyAdayo vividhashaktaya AnupUrvyAt |
tadbhahma vishvabhavamekamanantamAdyaM
AnandamAtramavikAramahaM prapadye ||**

lakShmInR^isiMha mama dehi karAvalambam

Shadakshari Bala

pUrvA~Nga of mUla vidyA is ShaDakSharI bAlA or tryakSharI

One can see the following statement in the kalpasUtra:

dakShiNakarNe bAlAmupadishya pashchAdiShTamanuM vadet |

1. Some here (like gopAla sUrin or subhagAnandanAtha) insist on the use of navAkSharI bAlA due to the sUtrAnuktatva of either ShaDakSharI or tryakSharI. rAmeshvara refutes this claim and insists on the use of tryakSharI bAlA as navArNa vidyA of bAlA is termed as yogabAlA which is explicitly declared in sarvasAdhAraNa krama as "shriyo.a~NgaM" by bhArgavarAma. The former vidyA of three letters is known as bAlA, shuddhabAlA or kumArI.
2. During the prakAshA of the mantras for the fifteen nityA-s, the sUtra says: kumArI kulasundarI. The commentary on this sUtra refers to tryakSharI bAlA and not navAkSharI as evident from tantrAntara and sampradAya. Thus, though there is no explicit uddhAra of tryakSharI in the kalpasUtra, the intent of the sUtrakAra seems clear: refer to other relevant tantras. The following clause will thus not come into effect (sUtrAnuktatvAt):

**svashAstre vartamAno yaH parashAstreNa vartate |
bhrUNahatyAsamaM tasya svashAstramavamanyataH ||**

3. There is a reference to bAlA in shrIkrama: bAlAdvirAvR^ittyA kIR^iptaShaDa~NgaH. It is quite obvious that the reference here is to tryakSharI again.

Based on these interpretations, some are of the opinion that the pUrvA~Nga vidyA of pa~nchadashI should be tryakSharI bAlA. Support for this assumption also comes from paramAnanda tantra, used almost universally to compliment the content of the kalpasUtra:

**sA tu tridha sthitA devi tatrAdya tryakSharI smR^itA |
dvitIya pa~nchadashyuktA tR^itIya ShoDashI bhavet ||**

tantrarAja, incorrectly identified by some as a part of shaktisa~Ngama tantra, again does the uddhAra of tryakSharI and not ShaDakSharI:

shuchiH svena yutastvAdyo rasAvahnisamanvitaH |
prANo dvitIyaH svayuto vanahR^icChaktibhiH paraH |
itlritA tryakSharI syAdityAdi ||

A manuscript dealing with the details of pUrNAbhiSheka, supposedly a part of kahAdi mata (of the kAdi, hAdi, kahAdi group; some like maheshAnandanAtha replace kahAdi by sAdi and explicitly state: sAdimate uktatvAt etc.) speaks of the upadesha of gaNapati, bAlA and laghu pAduka before mUlavidyopadesha. Lord reminds bhagavatI of an earlier chapter dealing with kulasundarI where bAlA tryakSharI vidyA was already revealed (probably referring to the tR^itIya paTala of kAdi mata or tantrarAja as it is available today).

j~nAnArNava, accepted as the svanatra tantra (indicated by AchArya bhagavatpAda in saundaryalaharI) by some authorities, again does the uddhAra of tryakSharI alone:

tripurA trividhA devi bAlAM tu prathamaM shR^iNu |
yasyA vij~nAnamAtreNa sAkShAtsuragurbhavet ||
sUryasvaraM samucchArya bindunAdakalAnvitam |
svarAntaM pr^ithivIyuktaM tUryasvaravibhUShitam ||
bindunAdakalAkrAntaM saragavAn bhR^iguravyayaH |
shakrasvarasamopeto vidyeyaM tryakSharI matA ||

nAgabhaTTa who represents a prevalent and flourishing sampradAya at some point in time, speaks of tryakSharI again in his tripurAsArasamucchaya:

atha trilokArchitashAsanAyAH
vakShyAMi bljatrayamambikAyAH |
goptavyametatkuladharmavidbhiH
amuShya hetornijasiddhaye cha ||

dakShiNAmUrti saMhitA again does the uddhAra of tryakSharI as the mukhya vidyA of bAlA:

vAgbhavaM prathamaM proktaM dvitIyaM kAmarAjakam |
tR^itIyaM shaktibIjaM cha mantroddhAraH prakIrtitaH ||

The ShaDakSharI is discussed only as one of the thirteen prastAra bhedaS of the mukhya vidyA:

anulomavilomAbhyAM bAlAmantraH ShadakSharaH ||

rudrayAmala, while describing pa~ncharatneshvarI vidhi for mahAShoDashI, again talks of tryakSharI followed by sambuddhi.

**shR^iNu devi pravakShyAmi pa~ncharatneshvarI manum |
yaM japtvA sAdhakaH kShipraM vicharedbhairavo yathA ||
trikUTA ShoDashI chaiva bAlika sumukhI tathA |
tAriNI pa~nchamI devi pa~ncharatneshvarI smR^itA |
vAgbhavaM shaktiBjaM cha kAmarAjAM tR^itIyakam || etc.**

bhAskaraAya identifies the name tryakSharI as referring to bAlA in saubhagyabhAskara. gauDapAdIya sUtra states the same thus: kumarI varNatrayavishiShTA. Most tantras thus seem to give greater importance to tryakSharI. Even the uddhAra of ShaDakSharI is seen only in a few tantras.

But it is incorrect to assume that there is no pramANa (one is listed below) for the use of ShaDakSharI bAlA. The question though is whether its use is more appropriate in the case of mukhyopAsyatva of bAlA rather than as pUrvA~Nga of lalitAmbika.

A chief tantra of shrIkula is the parA tantra which deals with bAlA, panchadashI and ShoDashI. The following is a statement from this tantra:

**kulaj~naH kashchidyo yajati kulapuShpaiH kulavidhau
kulAgAre dhyAyan kulajanani te manmathakalAm |
ShaDarNaM pUrvoktaM japati kulamantraM tava shive
sa jIvanmuktaH syAdakulakulapa~Nkeruhagate ||**

The reference here is clearly to ShaDakSharI bAlA and not tryakSharI. The same tantra also prescribes initiation into the kramotkrama vidyA of bAlA before panchadashI. Thus, though it seems that there is much more pramANa for the use of tryakSharI as pUrvA~Nga of brahmavidyA, the following needs to be considered:

1. There are also pramANas (like from parA tantra) which prescribe the use of ShaDakSharI vidyA.
2. Most living sampradAyas today that I have interacted with seem to use ShaDakSharI bAlA along with mahAgaNapati as pUrvA~Nga vidyA of lalitA.
3. Like the case of ShoDashI which includes pa~nchadashI in itself, some opine that the use of ShaDakSharI is warranted on account of it including the tryakSharI. This argument need not be technically correct as pointed out by rAmeshvara in the case of navAkSharI yogabAlA. Moreover, a hierarchical relation is non-existent between ShaDakSharI and tryakSharI like in the case of panchadashI and ShodashI.

Krama Shodha Nyasa

namastripurasundaryai
namo svacChandAnandanAthAya

bljaM kUTaM kramo dhAtustattvaM pa~nchamapa~nchakam |
pa~nchaviMshatisaMkhyAkA nyAsa ete prakIrtitAH ||
vAradIkShAkramashchaiva dIkShAkramastathaiva cha |
nyAsashchaivaM dvidhA choktau nityaM chaiva kriyeta chet ||

In the nirvana sundarl krama, a peculiar procedure is adopted for performing the extremely essential mahAShoDhA nyAsa. The krama outlined below is specific to kAdi vidyA.

Every day, the nyAsa is performed at midnight, after the customary japa of ekAkSharI parA and before the japa of the turIya sandhyA devatA. For the siddhi of nyAsAdhikAra, it is mandatory to precede each of the nyAsas with haMsa ShoDhA nyAsa. The devatA for haMsa ShoDhA nyAsa is bhagavatI haMsa kAlI or brahma kAlI, who is kAdividyeshvarI. The sAdhaka is reminded of dire consequences by bhagavatI bimbAmbika (quoting UrdhvAmnAya tantra), if he fails to perform haMsa ShoDhA nyAsa before any of the following nyAsas.

ravau padme shivakalA grahA doShanivArakAH |
dikpAlaDAkinI tArAdikaM pIThaM cha vinyaset ||

On Sundays, the upAsaka should perform the adharAmnAya ShoDhA nyAsa, the devatA for which is bhagavatI ugratArA. This nyAsa includes:

1. shivakalA nyAsa
2. graha nyAsa
3. dikpAla nyAsa
4. ShaTchakra nyAsa
5. tArAdi nyAsa

6. pItha nyAsa

**parA parAtparA nyAsau parAtparAtItA tathA |
chitparA chitparAtparA some svAdhiShThAne tathA |
sA chitparAtparAtItA tatheyaM bhuvenshvarI ||**

On Mondays, the upAsaka should perform the pUrvAmnAya ShoDhA nyAsa, the devatA for which is bhagavatI bhuvaneshvarI. This nyAsa includes:

1. parA nyAsa
2. parAtparA nyAsa
3. parAtparAtItA nyAsa
4. chitparA nyAsa
5. chitparAtparA nyAsa
6. chitparAtparAtItA nyAsa

**haMso mantro laghushchaiva mahAshoDhA tathA smR^itA |
grahashcha rAshinakShatrayogAH karaNameva cha |
pa~nchasaMvatsarA kAlYAH manUn bhaume nyasettathA ||**

On Tuesdays, the upAsaka should perform the dakShiNAMnAya ShoDhA nyAsa, the devatA for which is bhagavatI mahAkAlI. This nyAsa includes:

1. graha nyAsa
2. rAshi nyAsa
3. nakShatra nyAsa
4. yoga nyAsa
5. karaNa nyAsa
6. saMvatsara nyAsa

**ghorAShTakaM trikhaNDA chaivAkSharo devapa~nchakam |
DAAdyaShTakasya nyAso.api ShoDhAnyAsa udAhR^itaH ||**

On Wednesdays, the upAsaka should perform the pashchimAmnAya ShoDhA nyAsa, the devatA for which is bhagavatI navaratna kubjikA. This nyAsa includes:

1. pAduka nyAsa, dvAtriMshadvarNa nyAsa, gurumaNDaladevatAnyAsa, granthinyAsa
2. aghorA nyAsa
3. mAlinI nyAsa
4. shabdarAshi nyAsa
5. ShaD-dUtI nyAsa
6. ratnapa~nchaka nyAsa, navAtma nyAsa, ChoTika nyAsa, aghorAstra nyAsa, varNa nyAsa, trividyA nyAsa, ghorAShTaka nyAsa, rudrakhaNda nyAsa, mAtR^ika khaNda nyAsa, mantra trikhaNDA nyAsa, bljapanchaka nyAsa, pAdAdi ShaTka nyAsa

**ugramAtR^ikramaH kAlIkulapIThAni yoginI |
devatAmantrarUpANi nyAso.ayaM kAlikAkrame ||
ShoDhAnyAse vishuddhestu vinyaseccha kramAttathA |
mahAnirvANaShoDhA cha sarve sheShe prakIrtitAH ||**

On Thursdays, the upAsaka should perform the uttarAmnAya ShoDhA nyAsa, the devatA for which is bhagavatI samarasa nirvANa panchakrama-kAlika (guhya kAlika). This nyAsa includes:

1. ugramAtR^ika nyAsa
2. kAlIkulakrama nyAsa
3. pITha nyAsa
4. yoginI nyAsa

5. devatA nyAsa
6. mantra nyAsa

**shukravAre gaNeshashcha dashavidyAmayo grahaH |
nakShatrayoginI rAshiPIthaM laghuShoDhA smR^itA ||**

On Fridays, the upAsaka should perform the UrdhvAmnAya laghu ShoDhA nyAsa, the devatA for which is bhagavatI saubhAgya vidyA tripurasundarI. This nyAsa includes:

1. gaNesha nyAsa
2. graha nyAsa
3. nakShatra nyAsa
4. yoginI nyAsa
5. rAshi nyAsa
6. mAtR^ikA pItha nyAsa

In addition to that, the upAsaka should also perform the UrdhvAmnAya mahA ShoDhA nyAsa, the devatA for which is bhagavatI mahAShoDashI rAjarAjeshvarI. This nyAsa includes:

1. siddheshvarI nyAsa
2. parameshvarI nyAsa
3. mahAvidyA nyAsa
4. mahAkAlAdhIshvarI nyAsa
5. bljakalA nyAsa
6. mahAcharaNa nyAsa

**prapa~ncho bhuvanaM mUrtirmantradaivatamAtaraH |
mahAShoDAHvayaM nyAsamAj~nAyAM vinyaset sadA ||**

On Saturdays, the upAsaka should perform the mahA ShoDhA nyAsa, the devatA for which is bhagavatI mahAtripurasundarI. This nyAsa includes:

1. prapa~ncha nyAsa
2. bhuvana nyAsa
3. mUrta nyAsa
4. mantra nyAsa
5. devatA nyAsa
6. mAtR^ikA bhairava nyAsa

In addition to these nyAsas, mahAshakti nyAsa should be performed during kriShNASHtami, kR^iShNa chaturdashI, amA, paurNami and mAsa sa~NkramaNa

**kUTairbljairvinA devi ShoDhAnyAso na siddhyati |
tasmAt sarvaprayatnena kUTamantrANi yojayet ||**

Each of the devatAs associated with nirvana sundarI shrIkula krama have respective blja kUTas and so do the devatAs addressed in every pAda of these nyAsas. ShoDhA nyAsa siddhi is not accomplished if the nyAsas are performed without these blja kUTas by a sAmrAjya medhA dikShita.

Four Traditions of Sri Vidya Upasana

SAMAYACHARA: Worship Focused in the Mind

Samayachara refers to the internal mode of worship, and to worship employing homas; the fire ritual. We perform the homas and internal visualizations whether or not external puja articles are present. If they are not present, we can simply visualize them and still perform the entire puja.

In recent times, some confusion has arisen about Samayachara. It has been presented by some as a Brahminical or Vedic (or at least non- Tantric) form of Srividya; as the highest or purest or most evolved form of Srividya.

This is nonsense. Samaya is a part of almost any Srividya upasana, even if the "Brahminical bully boys" would like to claim it as their own pure island. Think about it: If one argues that Samayachara consists of a distinct set of lineages within Srividya, then one can legitimately ask if there actually is a Samayachara at all. If there is, what is its guru parampara? If it starts with Lakshmidhara, then who are his successors? What is the lineage? Does one exist at all? Or did it end within a generation or so, with Lakshmidhara?

In fact, Samayachara is simply one of Srividya's toolboxes; nothing more, nothing less. For example, I have been blessed enough to take diksha in Samayachara, Dakshinachara and Kaulachara paramparas. They are complementary, not conflicting. There is no inherent conflict between the traditions, and those who understand the paths properly know that none rejects the others.

DAKSHINACHARA: Worship Situated on an External Representation of Devi

In the Dakshinachara tradition, you worship the Sri Chakra. It is a bahya puja, meaning that you are worshiping something outside of yourself; usually a vigraham, i.e., an idol or yantra. However, the suvasini puja is also done. The suvasini is a woman who represents the Devi; but in this tradition the puja is done only to her feet.

KAULACHARA: Worship Focused in the Body

Samayachara and Dakshinachara traditions are, in the main, not very controversial; nearly any religious system could approve. But the Kaulachara marks a place where some people begin to get uncomfortable. Because here the focus turns to the human body itself as the microcosm that allows us to interface with the Macrocosm. Here is where we come face to face with the reality of Tantra – which is neither luridly "sexy" (as its Western "practitioners" would have it) nor decadently debased (as its Eastern critics claim). Tantra is not a religion; it is a methodology that can (but need not) be used in approaching many religious systems within Hinduism and Buddhism.

The central theme of Tantra has nothing to do with sex or booze; instead it is the seamless web – the idea of the absolute interrelatedness – and ultimate Oneness – of all things that exist, seen or unseen. Stepping down a peg, the main practical corollary of all this is the Macrocosmic/Microcosmic parallel – that life on the micro-level (individual lives and acts) can be used to extrapolate an understanding of life on the Macro (cosmic and divine) level (and vice versa). Stepping down a final peg from theory to practice, we may add that this basic web of beliefs is realized through powerful ritual acts involving body, speech and mind.

The Kaulachara does indeed include such sensational rituals as the panchamakara, the yoni puja and so on. But such rituals are, in fact, "exotics" – used once in a great while by some sadhaks in some circumstances, and by many others not at all. Perhaps the most common "body worship" acts in Kaulachara are the nyasas, which are totally unobjectionable – making the Christian sign of the cross is a type of nyasa, for goodness' sake.

In the Kaulachara tradition, the idol is replaced by a living woman or a man or a couple. You can also think of Her as the Union of Shiva and Shakti. You can worship Her as a woman, as a man, or as both. There are no restrictions in this regard. When we give Her a bath, we not only chant the Durga and Lakshmi Suktams; we also chant the Purusha Sukdam and the Rudram. The word "She" contains the word "He". So you need not worry that you are only worshipping the Mother Goddess and ignoring the Father God. You are worshipping both.

In the Kaulachara tradition, the notion of the self is completely negated. You see everyone as yourself. You invoke the Goddess into your spouse, into the suvasini or

into anyone. You yourself become the Goddess in the Viraja homa, even as you are worshiping Her. That is why it is said that Kaulas accumulate no karma – it is not a boast, but a logical result when one sheds the "self" to which karma generally attaches itself.

There can be no sense of shame in this process. That is why Dattatreya is known as Digambara, the Naked One. Dattatreya Digambara is one of the great mantras of Dattatreya. Shridi Sai Baba, Satya Sai Baba, Paramahansa Yogananda, Ganapati Sacchidananda – all of these teachers come from the Dattatreya tradition.

It is worth noting here that the Kaulachara follow all three concepts, one progressing into the next, starting as Kaulas and then later internalizing everything; external worship ends, becoming more dakshina or samaya in nature – but the achara remains Kaula. Cp. Lalita Sahasranama: "samayachara talpara."

VAMACHARA

The last Achara is called the Vamachara tradition. In contrast to the other three Acharas described here – which are based on the worship of the protective, nourishing, healing kind of aspects of the Divine – the Vamachara tradition worships the terrible aspects of the Divine, the laya pradhana, where dissolution is the main aspect. It is dissolution of the upasaka into the ultimate, resulting in absolute merger.

It is the Vamachara tradition that employs, among other things, rituals in the cremation grounds. There you will find vairagya, complete detachment. One's energy leaves the Visshudi Chakra, going up to the Command Centers and never coming down. It is very difficult to arrive at these centers without passing through the lower chakras. For example, until one has experienced Anahata Chakra, the heart center, to arrive at the Ajna Center is very dangerous: One will experience an inordinate number of fears that cannot be shaken off. One cannot be given the astra vidyas, the so- called "atom bomb" mantras and teachings -- because atom bombs can't be put into the hands of crazy people.

Suffice it to say that the Vamachara path is very dangerous without a proper guru. The aghoris are Vamacharis. Some Vamacharis do use their energies for healing. One

we know in Benares uses his healing energy to cure the lepers etc. Normally we like to think of God in the beautiful sense; but the Vamacharis prefer to think of God in the terrible sense.

Does End of Types Sri Chakra Archanas and its Procedures in brief

Sree Matre Namaha

